Human transmission eyed in 2 bird flu deaths in Vietnam

Story below, Column 2

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, February 2, 2004 ★★ 64 pages / 6 sections / vol. 19 / no. 56 P15
website: www.inq7.net

CBCP issues gag order on bishops

NAKAKALITO 'PAG MARAMI ANG NAGSE-SERMON!

By Blanche Rivera

WHERE the current circus that is the national political scene is concerned, it's back to the vow of silence for the country's outspoken bishops.

Well, almost.

CBCP/ A20

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Currency speculators warned**
  BUSINESS /B1
- **Suicide bombers kill 100 in Iraq**
  WORLD/A10
- **244 die in haj stampede in Saudi Arabia**
  WORLD /A11

GMA, FPJ camps doubt Gringo plot

Nothing but intrigue, opposition bets say

By Christine O. Avendaño and Christian V. Esguerra

NOTHING but intrigue in a bid to divide the opposition.

Opposition candidates belittled the alleged military intelligence report claiming there was a plot to oust movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. in the event he won the presidency.

"It's simply unbelievable. It's fiction," said Sen. Loren Legarda, Poe's running mate.

Legarda said she and Poe, who were shooting a commercial yesterday, merely laughed off the report.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., who is seeking reelection under the KNP, said the intelligence report which implicated opposition Sen. Gregorio Honasan, "should not be given much importance."

"We're treating it as an intrigue as it is meant to cause a split in the ranks of FPJ's camp," Pimentel said in a separate interview.

Even Malacañang expressed doubts over the existence of the report, allegedly prepared by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp), on "Campaign Plan Andres" which purportedly details a takeover by a military junta in case of a Poe victory.

"First, we think that there is probably no secret report. We will not comment on this issue because we're not sure whether there is indeed a re-

GMA, FPJ/ A4

A TASTE OF PATEROS: Alyansa ng Pag-asa standard-bearer Raul Roco (center) and senatorial candidates Bong Coo (left) and Nicanor Gatmaitan eat "balut" during the Balut Festival in Pateros, Metro Manila, which is popular for its delicacy of duck eggs. RANDY HORMILLOSA

2 senators slam JDV on budget deadlock

By Christine O. Avendaño

IT LOOKS like the House of Representatives will have its way.

Senate President Franklin Drilon is resigned to Congress not passing the proposed P864-billion national budget for this year because of Speaker Jose de Venecia's statement that the House will not cooperate with the Senate in approving the budget.

"I've given up," Drilon said. "We will have to live with the 2003 budget (of P804 billion) because of the attitude of the House."

But Drilon and fellow administration Senators Joker Arroyo and Francis Pangilinan took exception to De Venecia's reasons the House was against approving the 2004 budget.

De Venecia had said the House decided to settle for a reenacted budget because it was cheaper by P60 billion than the proposed budget and, thus, would keep government spending within bounds.

He also claimed the disagreement between the House and the Senate over the 2004 budget stemmed from the senators' "consuming desire" to protect their pork barrel of P200 million each. Pork barrel is a source of kickbacks for legislators, who identify projects financed by funds from the national budget.

Drilon and Arroyo said the Senate and House panels never met to reconcile the proposed 2004 budget because the

2 SENATORS/ A20

LP still brokering GMA-Roco alliance

By Christine O. Avendaño

NOW IT can be told.

The Liberal Party had tried to broker talks between President Macapagal-Arroyo and former Sen. Raul Roco the whole month of December last year, in a bid to bring the two presidential candidates together for the May polls, the INQUIRER learned yesterday.

But Senate President Franklin Drilon, chair of the party, said the "unity talks" failed because the two camps would not budge from their positions and both candidates were determined to run for the presidency.

Now with the official campaign period set to begin in a week's time, Drilon said there may be a need for the two candidates to reconsider.

"They should be open to it in the coming weeks," Drilon said in a phone interview. "It's about time to reexamine their options."

He conceded that the candidacy of opposition coalition candidate Fernando Poe Jr. posed a big threat, noting that the movie actor was leading the surveys.

"They should review (their position), maybe after a Social Weather Stations survey on what they should do," the LP chair said.

LP/ A20

Roco belittles latest SWS poll findings

By TJ Burgonio

THE ELECTIONS, not surveys, will determine the winner.

So said presidential candidate Raul Roco as he and three of his senatorial candidates pressed ahead with their visits to various parts of Metro Manila.

"Sovereignty resides in the people, not in Mangahar Mangahas. Surveys are surveys," said Roco, standard-bearer of Aksyon Demokratiko, when asked about his morale after he came out third in the latest survey by Social Weather Stations.

"Last night, I was watching TV, and they're saying there is still so much changing ... So we'll wait. The elections will determine who the winner is," Roco said.

Mangahas heads the Social Weather Stations, a polling firm which released on

ROCO/ A22

GMA rebound indicates FPJ vulnerability

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE LATEST Social Weather Stations public opinion survey showing a rebound for President Macapagal-Arroyo underlines two points. The first is it spikes the propaganda of the much-touted invincibility of the opposition presidential candidate, Fernando Poe Jr.; the second is the volatility of the public preference, four months before the May 10 election.

According to the results of the SWS survey that was disclosed Friday, 36 percent of the respondents said they intended to vote for Poe while 27 percent said they would vote for Ms Macapagal. Although Poe was still ahead, he gained only a few percentage points from his more than 30-percent showing in last November's survey in which there was a blip that improved his previous rating. The latest survey does not indicate Poe is gaining momentum that his overenthusiastic handlers believe will enable him to sweep the election by a landslide.

The more significant finding of the latest survey is that while Poe has not made a big leap forward, Ms Macapagal has made a rebound and has stopped the widening of the gap between her and Poe. Equally significant is that the President has overtaken former Education Secretary Raul Roco, who polled 19 percent.

GMA/ A22

Tell truth, Saycon urges Kawal

By Christian Esguerra

THE BELEAGUERED leader of a loose political group yesterday urged junior military officers linked to a destabilization plot against the government to "tell the truth" in the sedition case expected to be filed against him this week.

Pastor "Boy" Saycon, secretary general of the Council on Philippine Affairs, said it was unfair for the leaders of Kawal Pilipino to implicate him in yet another plot to overthrow the Macapagal administration. "They should just tell what really happened in all our meetings," he said in a telephone interview.

Aside from Saycon, five junior officers and three civilians will be charged this week with inciting to sedition, according to National Bureau of Investigation chief Reynaldo Wycoco.

The NBI Special Task Force is investigating Kawal Pilipino soldiers who accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of ordering the military to monitor the movements of her rivals in the presidential election.

Saycon admitted that he had met with the group on at least three occasions last month, but he claimed that

TELL/ A4

Human transmission eyed in bird flu deaths

HANOI—Two sisters who died of bird flu in Vietnam may have caught the disease from their brother in what could be the first known case of human-to-human transmission of the illness in its current outbreak, the World Health Organization said Sunday.

The source of the two sisters' infection has not yet been conclusively identified, said Bob Dietz, a WHO spokesperson. "However, the WHO considers that limited human-to-human transmission from the brother to his sisters is one possible explanation."

Up until now, there has been no evidence of human-to-human transmission of avian influenza. Health officials believe the disease is contracted through contact with sick chickens.

Health officials, however, have warned of the danger that the bird flu virus could combine with a human influenza virus. The two flu viruses could swap genes, resulting in a hybrid with the virulence of bird flu and the contagiousness of human flu, triggering a possible global flu pandemic.

Laboratory tests in Hong Kong verified that the two Vietnamese sisters, aged 23 and 30, had been infected by the H5N1 bird flu virus, Dietz said.

Vietnam now has a total of 10 confirmed cases of bird flu—eight of whom have died. One 8-year-old girl remains in a Ho Chi Minh City hospital while a 4-year-old boy has recovered and has been discharged. Seven of the cases are children under 14 years of age.

"The investigation (of the deaths of the two sisters) failed to reveal a specific event, such as contact with sick poultry, or an environmental source to explain these cases," the WHO said of the sisters'

HUMAN/ A20

DOY COMES HOME ROGER MARGALLO

The cremated remains of former Vice President Salvador H. Laurel, who died of cancer in California, arrive at the Ninoy Aquino Centennial Airport escorted by his wife Celia and son Cocoy. *(Story on Page A2.)*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers mostly over the eastern sections.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/01/04

Second FRONT PAGE

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Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
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Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Doy was better politician–Cory

By Volt Contreras

HE WAS the "better politician." Former President Corazon Aquino had this to say about the late Vice President Salvador "Doy" Laurel when she showed up at his wake yesterday, a gesture that showed old wounds had healed between the two icons of People Power.

President Macapagal also came to condole with Laurel's widow, Celia Diaz, hours after the statesman's family arrived from the United States with the brass urn containing his cremated remains. Laurel died of cancer on Jan. 28, at age 75, in California.

The Philippine Airlines flight that the Laurels took touched down at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at 4:15 a.m. From there, honor guards of the Philippine Air Force escorted the family to the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City.

Aquino arrived at the wake at around 4:15 p.m. She talked privately for about an hour with Celia and the Laurels' third of eight children, Cocoy. Facing reporters later, Aquino said, "I remember him most for agreeing to be my vice president."

"Because he was the better politician," Aquino said, "he thought me a number of things. I certainly welcomed his suggestions. It was he who taught me to throw flowers to the crowd, things like that—and I guess also how to express myself more (effectively because) I didn't have a powerful voice."

But after delivering what might count as an impromptu eulogy, Aquino was taciturn when asked about her past rift with the deceased. "We settled things between us," she said simply in Filipino.

Aquino ran under Laurel's United Nationalist Democratic Organization. When they assumed power following the February 1986 People Power uprising, Aquino repaid Laurel by naming him prime minister and foreign affairs secretary.

But in September 1987, Laurel resigned the foreign affairs post, citing differences with Ms Aquino on the insurgency and other issues. A year later he publicly urged her to resign and call a new election.

Ms Macapagal, who arrived at around 5 p.m., also had a private talk with Aquino and Celia Laurel in front of the urn and large portrait of a younger Laurel.

During a necrological service held by Laurel's Nacionalista Party at 2 p.m., eulogists recounted that Laurel sacrificed his own ambition to become president and gave way to Ms Aquino to bolster the opposition's chances of beating Marcos.

Sen. Manuel Villar, the party's executive committee chair, vowed to revive the dormant NP, saying the late statesman must have been "in deep emotional pain watching the deterioration of the political landscape, the blurring of party distinctions, the focus on sheer media popularity, the growing cynicism and the decline of idealism."

Former Misamis Oriental Gov. Homobono Adaza lamented that Laurel's contributions to the anti-Marcos struggle "reaped a whirlwind of ingratitude from the personalities that he helped assume the levers of power."

At the time of his death, Laurel was fighting a graft case before the Sandiganbayan in connection with alleged anomalies in the Centennial Expo project in Clark Field, Pampanga. He was charged as head of the National Centennial Commission created by the Ramos administration.

Laurel's remains will be laid to rest with full military honors at the Libingan ng mga Bayani on Friday, Feb. 6, following a 9 a.m. memorial Mass at the Santuario.

Necrological services are scheduled today at the Office of the Vice President, Philippine International Convention Center, 2:30 p.m., and at the Department of Foreign Affairs, 4 p.m.; and tomorrow at the Senate, 9:30 p.m., and at the Lower House, 2 p.m.

On Feb. 5, the remains will be taken to the Laurel's hometown of Tanauan, Batangas, 9 a.m., then to the provincial capitol in Batangas City, 1:30 p.m. *With Carlito Pablo*

FORMER President Cory Aquino, with Celia Diaz-Laurel, says a prayer before the brass urn containing the ashes of Doy Laurel.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

OFWs prefer Iran isle to RP

By Jerome Aning

ABOUT 50 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have chosen to live in deplorable conditions on a small island in Iran while waiting for their working papers rather than return to the Philippines where there is no certainty of employment.

The Gulf News reported on Saturday that the Filipino OFWs were waiting to get visas to live and work in the United Arab Emirates, where their job contracts had earlier expired, leaving them stranded on the Iranian island of Kish.

Instead of going home to the Philippines, many OFWs, to save time and money, slip into Kish while waiting for their new UAE travel and working papers.

The Filipinos, some of whom were interviewed by the English language UAE-based daily, were disguised as tourists and lived in deplorable conditions on the island.

One penniless OFW, the paper reported, had been reduced to sneaking into a hotel to share a friend's room. The Filipino has been on "floating status" as he awaits news about his old job in Dubai, UAE.

Some Filipinos have found temporary work on Kish, a small island on the Persian Gulf which Iran has declared a free zone for international trade and tourism.

Gulf News reported that five OFWs were working in a restaurant without pay in exchange for food and lodging.

Others survived by asking for the heads of fish sold in the public market. They buy rice with money donated by other Filipinos leaving the island.

Many sleep under trees by the beach and share their food with other stranded foreigners such as Ugandans and Indians.

Most of the Filipino workers do get support from their families back home or from their employers in the UAE who have promised to process their visas, Gulf News said.

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Gov't exec tied to scam

By Clarissa S. Batino

AN UNDERSECRETARY of the Department of Finance, who used to be a senior partner at the influential Cruz and Villaraza law firm, has been implicated in the P2.5-billion tax credit scam involving Faustino and Gloria Chingkoe.

Felix Chingkoe, estranged brother of Faustino and a key witness in the tax scam, has linked Finance Undersecretary Inocencio Ferrer Jr. to the irregularity. He also blamed Ferrer for the slow investigation and prosecution of officials of the 11 companies owned by the Chingkoe couple.

Ferrer is a former partner in the law firm with links to President Macapagal-Arroyo. He is vice chair of Special Presidential Task Force 156, the DOF-led group tasked to investigate and file cases against perpetrators of the tax credit scam that also involved 17 former DOF officials and employees.

Ferrer became finance undersecretary in April 2002 replacing Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo.

The scam, which defrauded the government of some P2.3 billion in tax revenues, involved the issuance of fraudulent tax credit certificates in connivance with top finance officials.

The 11 Chingkoe companies allegedly submitted spurious documents to claim the tax credits, a form of tax incentive enjoyed by exporters, particularly garment companies.

The Chingkoes later sold the spurious tax credit certificates, of which more than half went to Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell, which used the tax credits to pay their tax obligations to the BIR and Customs.

In May last year, Ferrer was accused of extorting money from Faustino in the presence of then Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, according to Felix.

Felix said the task force has spent P56 million but has not prosecuted anybody. He said even the extradition case against Gloria Chingkoe has not progressed while his brother Faustino is allowed to freely travel in and out of the country on P45,000 bail.

He said that upon the instruction of Ferrer, Felix completed on August 2002 the so-called affidavit of intervention, a 260-page report with 4,000 pages of documents, testimonies and evidence that should have fast-tracked the investigation and the filing of lawsuits against the 11 companies.

So far, the task force has only filed cases against four Chingkoe companies before the Ombudsman.

Ferrer, however, denied Chingkoe's accusation that he has hampered the investigation. He said that only last Friday, the task force filed another case against a Chingkoe company before the Ombudsman but refused to give details.

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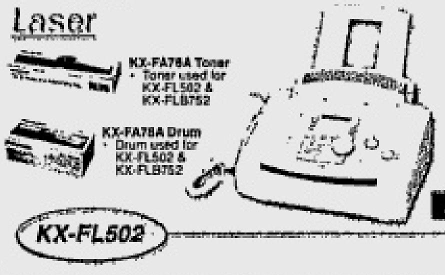

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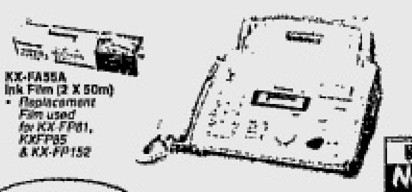

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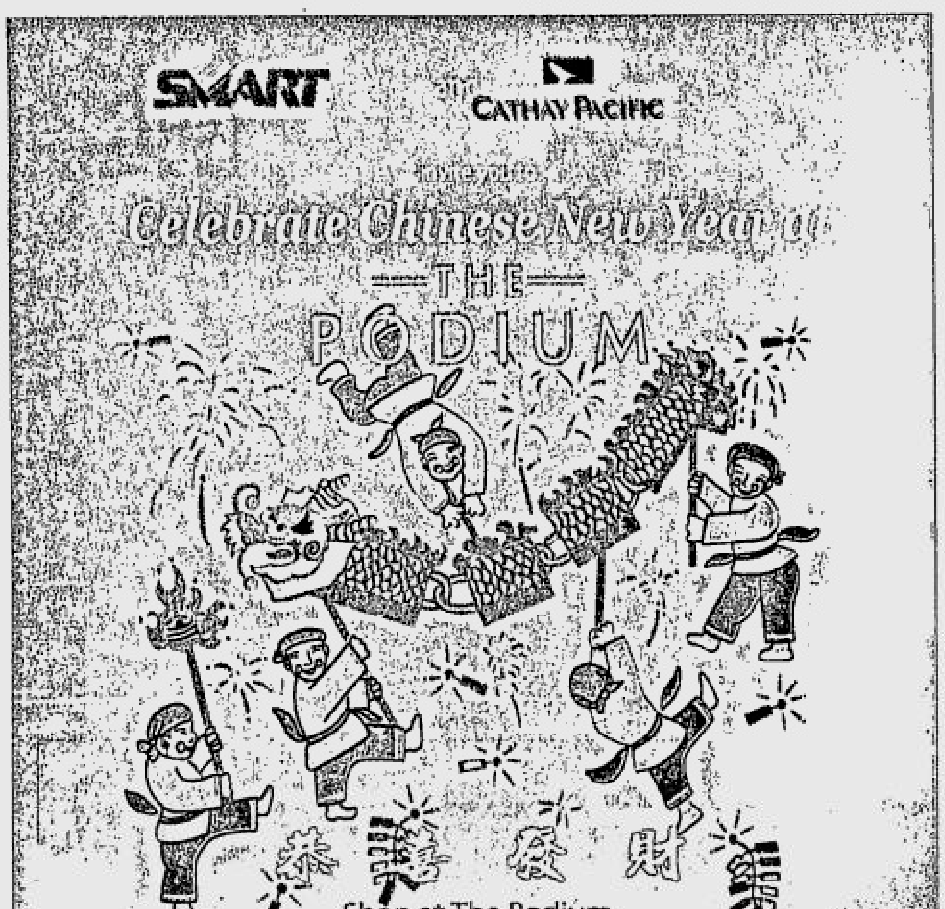

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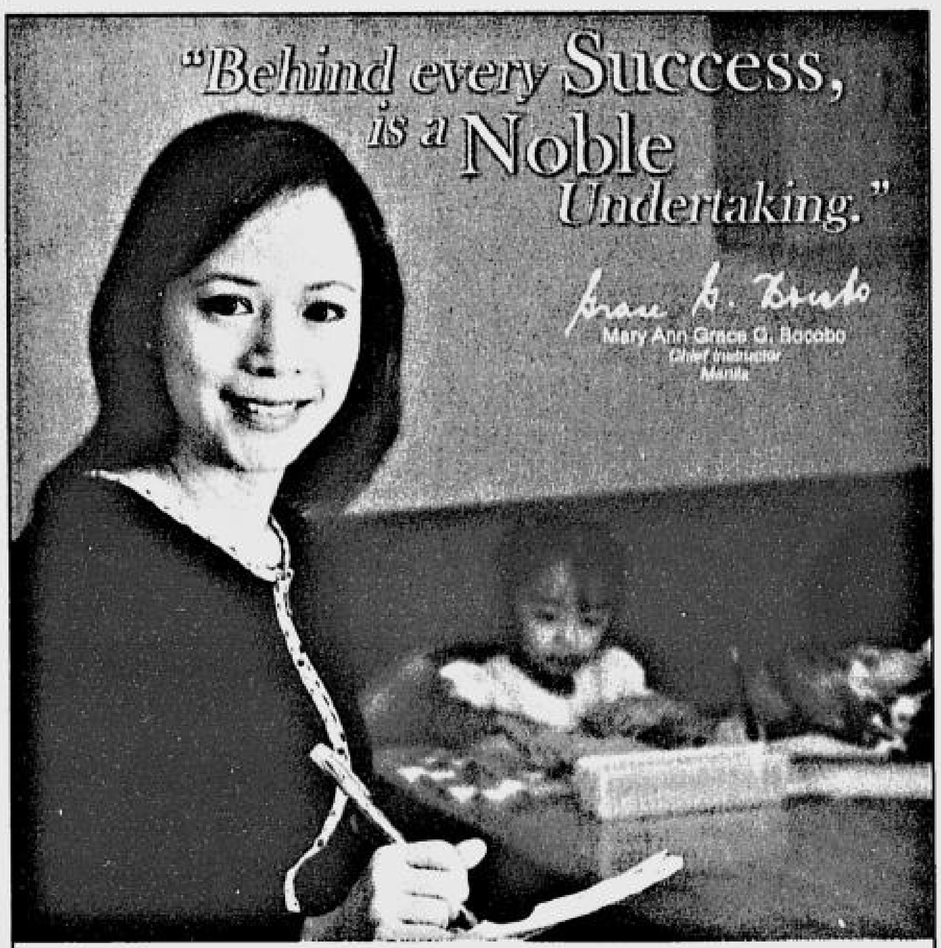

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GMA, FPJ camps doubt Gringo plot

From page A1

port," said President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye in a radio interview with RMN.

The junta's members were supposed to have been handpicked by Honasan.

The Armed Forces yesterday described the takeover-by-junta plan as an "old report." But Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, AFP spokesperson, said the threat from "Campaign Plan Andres" remained, six months after it was uncovered.

The threat exists because the military has yet to identify all the civilians involved in the plan, Lucero said.

"We're telling the public so (the people) will be aware that there was a plan by the perpetrators of this campaign to establish their own government," he told reporters.

The military pieced together information pertaining to the plot based on documents and diskettes recovered from Oakwood Premier during the failed power grab last July 27.

AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia in fact outlined the plan at a media briefing last Aug. 11, exactly 15 days after the Oakwood mutiny, the official said.

Honasan, who led several coup attempts in the 1980s, was identified as the "Kuya" (big brother) who would head a 15-man national recovery council.

Lucero furnished the INQUIRER a transcript of the August briefing during which Garcia said the Oakwood mutiny was the third option under "Oplan Kayumanggi," the military component of Andres.

Kayumanggi was divided into "preparation" and "direct action." The second phase had three options, including the Oakwood takeover.

The mutineers, led by Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes III, holed themselves up in the Oakwood luxury apartments in Makati City after the government discovered the attempted power grab, according to Garcia.

Lucero emphasized that the military component of Andres should no longer be a cause of worry for the public.

Not rational

Pimentel said he did not see the rationale behind the report, noting that Honasan was the one in charge of security for Poe's election campaign.

It was also "quite plausible" that the report was designed to scare people into voting for Poe.

Poe's media bureau said the report was part of "heightened maneuvers of the Palace to split up the mainstream opposition and upset the imminent landslide victory of FPJ in the May 10 elections."

In his radio interview, Bunye cleared Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. of involvement in the destabilization attempts against the government, the most recent of which was the "Kawal Pilipino" incident.

Bunye said some groups had been dragging Guingona's name to their cause to lend legitimacy to their action.

"Our Vice President will not get involved in this kind of mess. He knows what is proper and what is needed to maintain national stability," Bunye said.

Bunye noted that the government had a "tight case" against the Kawal conspirators. "People who are out to destabilize the government should get the message clear: we will not hesitate to go after them with the full force of the law and justice." *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

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Tell truth, Saycon urges Kawal

From page A1

they did not discuss any destabilization plot.

At least 40 junior officers were present during the first meeting at the Manila Polo Club in early January. Another meeting, attended by "12 to 14" officers, was held at Saycon's office in Makati City.

Saycon said the third meeting was held in his house in Ayala-Alabang in Muntinlupa City. He said only four officers showed up.

At least 10 classmates of Captains Peter Edwin Navarro, Mohammad Yusop Hassan, Philip Esmeralda, Marcos Serafica and Rembert Baylosis at the Officers Candidate School of the Philippine Army in Tanay, Rizal, have claimed that they were present in two meetings in which Saycon and Navarro tackled the destabilization plot.

Saycon insisted that the soldiers had sought each meeting to seek Copa's "guidance and political analysis" on such issues as the postponement of the May elections being pushed by an obscure group.

Quoting Kawal leaders, Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, military spokesperson, yesterday said the officers had been duped into attending the Manila Polo Club meeting. Navarro invited his classmates at the OCS on the pretext that they would be attending a birthday party, Lucero told reporters.

Navarro is the son of retired police general and Copa member Pedro Navarro who, along with Saycon, Copa member Boy Montelibano, and lawyer Azodin Baltazar are set to be charged with inciting to sedition.

Lucero said most of the officers did not show up in the subsequent meetings after they realized that the first gathering was, in fact, "political."

In the Manila Polo Club meeting, Saycon claimed the young Navarro and his group only inquired about the group behind the "No-el" (No Election) movement. With no clear group in mind, he claimed he just briefed the officers on the upcoming Supreme Court decision that later nullified computerized elections.

Asked about the military's role in case the elections were postponed, Saycon said he had warned of mass actions but had insisted that soldiers should remain neutral.

The officers, he claimed, sought the next two meetings as part of a "continuing exchange of information."

"There was really nothing clandestine, especially at the [Manila] Polo Club meeting." Saycon said. "How could you plot to overthrow the government in such a place, in the presence of waiters and all?"

If indeed a destabilization plot was in the works, Saycon said Navarro and his group should have squealed on him much earlier. "I pity these young officers," he said. "They're obviously under duress."

The soldiers have been placed in the custody of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya after going public with their complaints against the military leadership.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, February 2, 2004
THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD

1st Reading: Mal 3:1-4
2nd Reading: Heb 2:14-18
Gospel: Lk 2:22-40

When the day came for the purification according to the law of Moses, Joseph and Mary brought the baby up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, as it is written in the law of the Lord: Every firstborn male shall be consecrated to God. And they offered a sacrifice as ordered in the law of the Lord: a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons.

There lived in Jerusalem at this time a very upright and devout man named Simeon; the Holy Spirit was in him. He looked forward to the time when the Lord would comfort Israel, and he had been assured by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before seeing the Messiah of the Lord. So he was led into the Temple by the Holy Spirit at the time the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law.

Simeon took the child in his arms and blessed God, saying,

"Now, O Lord, you can dismiss
your servant in peace,
for you have fulfilled your word
and my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you display for all the people to see.
Here is the light you will reveal to the nations
and the glory of your people Israel."

His father and mother wondered at what was said about the child. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, "See him; he will be for the rise or fall of the multitudes of Israel. He shall stand as a sign of contradiction, while a sword will pierce your own soul. Then the secret thoughts of many may be brought to light."

There was also a prophetess named Anna, daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. After leaving her father's home, she had been seven years with her husband, and since then she had been continually about the Temple, serving God as a widow night and day in fasting and prayer. She was now eighty-four. Coming up at that time, she gave praise to God and spoke of the child to all who looked forward to the deliverance of Jerusalem.

When the parents had fulfilled all that was required by the law of the Lord, they returned to their town, Nazareth in Galilee. There the child grew in stature and strength and was filled with wisdom: the grace of God was upon him.

Commentary

The Law is mentioned three times in this reading: everything is being done "according to the Law." Jesus appears as fully within the Law; everything is being done the right way; he is fully identified with the Jewish people, or as a commentator with a lot of hindsight put it, "completely immersed in humanity." Very well, if there is to be hindsight, then let's see this child as a grown man put to death in accordance with the same Law. But can you still see the eight-day-old baby once you have mentioned his death?

What else is mentioned three times in this reading? The Holy Spirit. But remember, this is the Old Testament Holy Spirit. It is not yet the divine Person of the Christian Trinity. It was the undifferentiated Spirit of God that hovered over the waters at the beginning of creation (Gen 1:2). The new Spirit would take people right out of the embrace of the Law.

Sometimes it can be a good thing to try and set aside some of our hindsight. When hindsight gets in before sight itself, it can blind rather than illuminate. We have to give Jesus time to grow up!—not only in himself but in us.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CRIMINAL LAW (AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES)—Unlawful aggression presupposes actual, sudden, unexpected or imminent danger—not merely threatening and intimidating action. Uncertain, premature and speculative was the assertion of appellant that the victim was about to stab him, when the latter had merely drawn out his knife. There is aggression, only when the one attacked faces real and immediate threat to one's life. The peril sought to be avoided must be imminent and actual, not just speculative. Even assuming arguendo that there was an altercation before the stabbing incident and that some danger did in fact exist, the imminence of that danger had already ceased the moment appellant disarmed the victim by wresting the knife from the latter. After the former had successfully seized it, there was no longer any unlawful aggression to speak of that would have necessitated the need to kill the latter. Hence, appellant became the unlawful aggressor when he stabbed the victim. When an unlawful aggression that has begun no longer exists, the one who resorts to self-defense has no right to kill or even to wound the former aggressor. To be sure, when the present victim no longer persisted in his purpose or action to the extent that the object of his attack was no longer in peril, there was no more unlawful aggression that would warrant legal self-defense on the part of appellant. Undoubtedly, the latter went beyond the call of self-preservation when he proceeded to inflict excessive, atrocious and fatal injuries on the latter, even when the allegedly unlawful aggression had already ceased. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Justice Panganiban, People vs Escarlos, G. R. No. 148912, September 10, 2003] BY R. B. VERA

Solons slam FPJ's 40-yr 'track record'

By Carlito Pablo

IS THAT it?

Administration lawmakers yesterday twitted Fernando Poe Jr. for saying his 40 years experience as an actor was all the track record he needed to back his bid for the presidency.

Addressing supporters in Naga City over the weekend, Poe, standard-bearer of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, said his having played varied roles in the movies allowed him to identify with the concerns of ordinary people.

While it was true the actor's onscreen personas have included a wide range of characters, from laborer to a city mayor, Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. (Lakas, Surigao del Sur) pointed out: "He has not played the role of a president."

But even if he had, Pichay quipped, that would not necessarily mean the lives of 80 million Filipinos would be safe in the hands of the acknowledged "King of Philippine Movies."

Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) agreed. "(Those) roles were make-believe," he said. "The presidency is real—there are no scripts, and no take-two's." It was "unfortunate" that Poe could only bank on his show biz background, the solon added.

Pichay noted that Poe had taken potshots at President Macapagal-Arroyo on such issues as lack of transparency and rule of law, yet the actor has not presented his own position on those same issues. The best FPJ has done, Pichay said, was to "give lame and general suggestions."

He insisted that Poe's failure to tell the people exactly what he means to do in Malacañang proves that the actor is just a "pawn" of interest groups, not the least of which is the camp of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

"FPJ should now wake up and deal with the reality that he is being used for other people's purposes," Pichay said. "(He should be) wise enough to determine the real motives of his supporters."

Nograles summed it up in a piece of unsolicited advice: "Poe should stick to what he is good at—the movies—and not (aspire for) the Palace."

Ping's camp says gov't rehashing raps

By Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. PANFILO Lacson's camp yesterday said Malacañang was out to "rehash" old allegations of his purported involvement in the illegal drug trade and the twin slayings of public relations man Bubby Dacer and his driver Emmanuel Corbito in 1999.

The senator's supporters said they received reports that Mary "Rosebud" Ong was seen visiting two convicted female drug traffickers—Phoebe Astudillo and Beth Lorenzana—at the Correctional Institute for Women on Jan. 28.

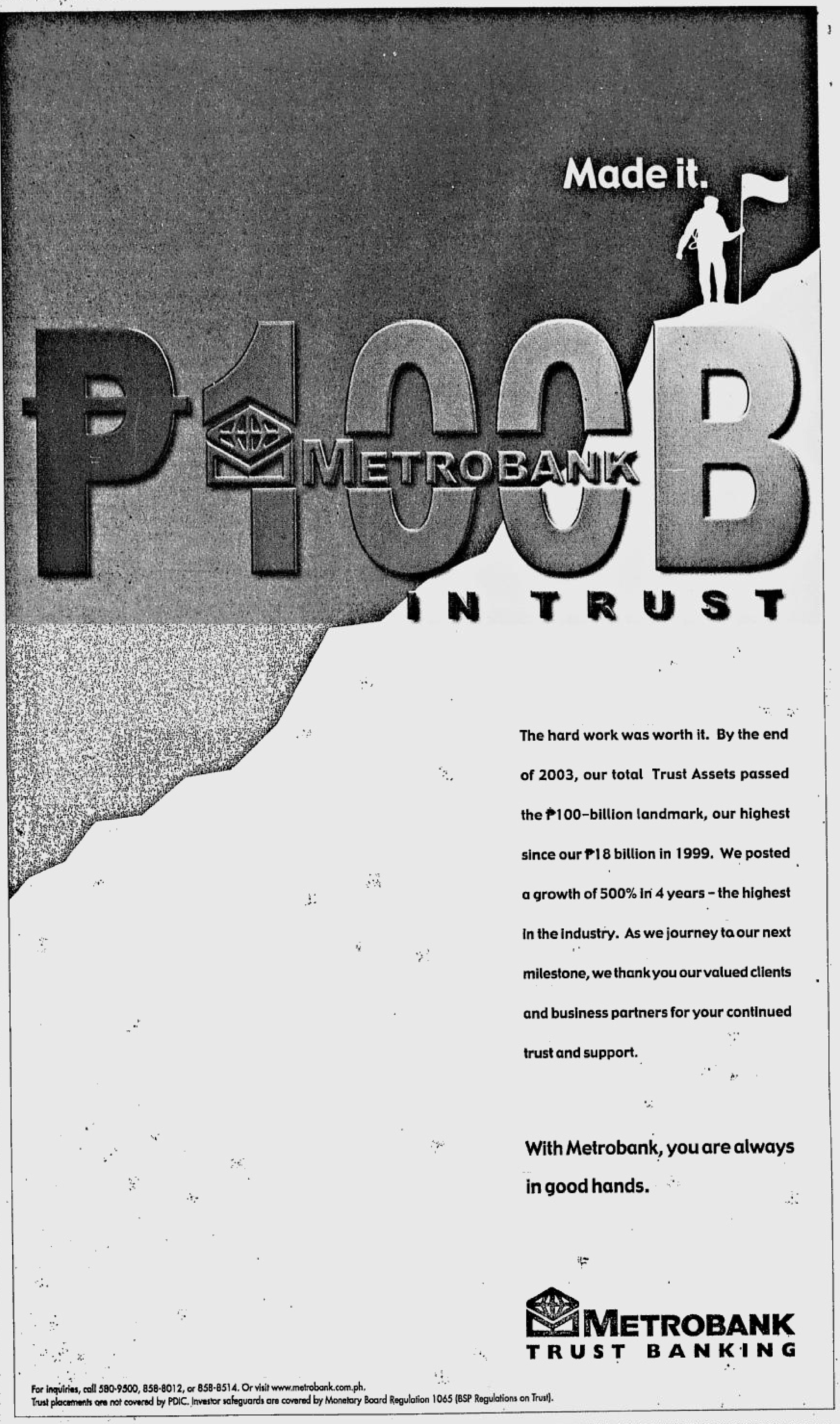
In a statement, they said this was an apparent effort to recruit the convicts "in the fresh wave of vilifying attacks" against Lacson, who is running for president in the May polls.

Astudillo, who is serving a life sentence, was one of the witnesses supposed to be presented during the Senate hearings looking into allegations by former intelligence chief Victor Corpus that Lacson was involved in illegal drugs.

Lacson's supporters also said they received information that the National Bureau of Investigation, on orders from its director Reynaldo Wycoco, had taken custody of a former civilian agent of the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force to "use him as a supposed witness" against Lacson in the Dacer-Corbito case.

They claimed that former PAOCTF operative Rigor Aguilar was "being coached to come up with an affidavit implicating Lacson ... in exchange for a huge sum of money."

The statement concluded that Malacañang was "conducting surveillance of the political opposition" and rehashing "trumped-up charges ... in an effort to frustrate the fighting chance of President Macapagal's opponents in the May 10 elections."



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Fund that got Davide in trouble to be audited

By Carlito Pablo

THE COMMISSION on Audit has given Congress the go-ahead to hire an independent accounting firm to do a "specialized audit" of the multibillion-peso Judiciary Development Fund of the Supreme Court.

COA chair Guillermo Carague said the state auditing agency "interposes no objection to the hiring by the House of Representatives of an independent and reputable accounting or auditing firm of your choice to undertake the specialized audit."

Carague told House committee on justice chair Rep. Marcelino Libanan (NPC, Eastern Samar) that COA agreed with Congress' objective of "ensuring the highest degree of transparency and objectivity in the conduct of such audit."

It will be recalled that alleged anomalies in the disbursement of the JDF served as the basis for the impeachment complaint initiated by congressmen against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. last year.

Carague told Libanan that his letter to the committee "serves as the authority deputizing the accounting or auditing firm you will hire."

Sought for comment, Libanan said he had furnished a copy of Carague's letter to Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), who will scout for an accounting firm.

The House committee on justice earlier conducted a probe into disbursements from the JDF.

A group of congressmen, initially numbering 85, filed an impeachment complaint against Davide on Oct. 23, 2003, alleging that some P762.5 million in JDF funds had been misused.

Under the law, the Chief Justice is the sole administrator of the fund. The JDF is derived from, among other things, legal fees paid to the court.

Presidential Decree 1949, the law that created the JDF, stipulates that 80 percent of the fund shall be used for the cost of living allowances of court employees, while the remaining 20 percent shall be used for office equipment and court facilities.

Davide was accused of "technical malversation" for using part of the JDF for the construction of cottages in Baguio City for the magistrates, which the solons claimed were unauthorized expenditures.

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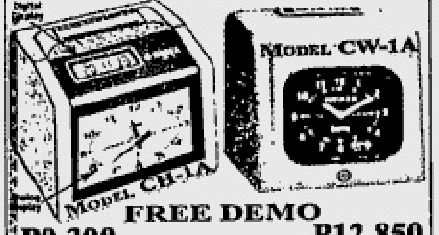

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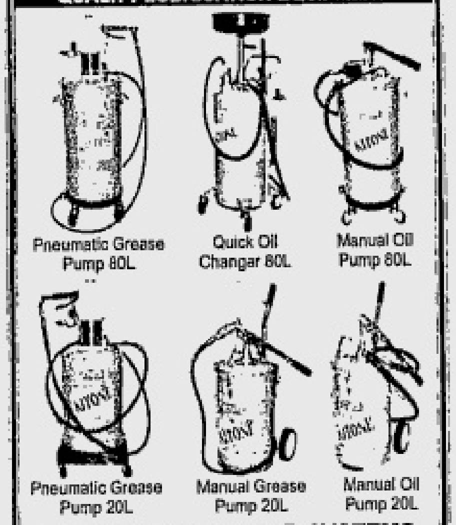

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Rights victims press solons on Marcos loot

By Dona Pazzibugan

RIGHTS abuse victims during martial law have not given up on Congress passing a law that would compensate them out of the $684 million in recovered Marcos ill-gotten assets.

The legislators are pressed for time, however, since Congress is set to adjourn on Feb. 6.

"We're putting the pressure on them to pass the bills," said Marie Hilao-Enriquez, secretary general of Selda, a group of martial law victims.

The legislators would have to amend the agrarian reform law in order to set aside about $200 million of the recovered Marcos loot for the victims.

Without the amendment, the entire $684 million would go to the government's agrarian reform program.

House Bill No. 4535 is up for third and final reading, while its counterpart in the upper chamber, Senate Bill 1877, is up for second reading.

Enriquez believes Congress still has time to pass the law if the legislators are pressured enough.

She said Selda members have been religiously attending the congressional hearings.

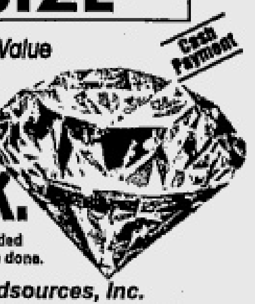
The Philippine National Bank is expected to turn the $684 million over to the government this week.

The Supreme Court ruled on July 15, 2003 that the Marcos assets were ill-gotten. The decision became final last Nov. 18.

The government has made a commitment to the Swiss government it would use part of the money to compensate the victims of martial law abuses.

Selda initiated the historic class-suit against the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

A US Hawaii district court awarded 9,539 victims about $2 billion in damages back in 1995.



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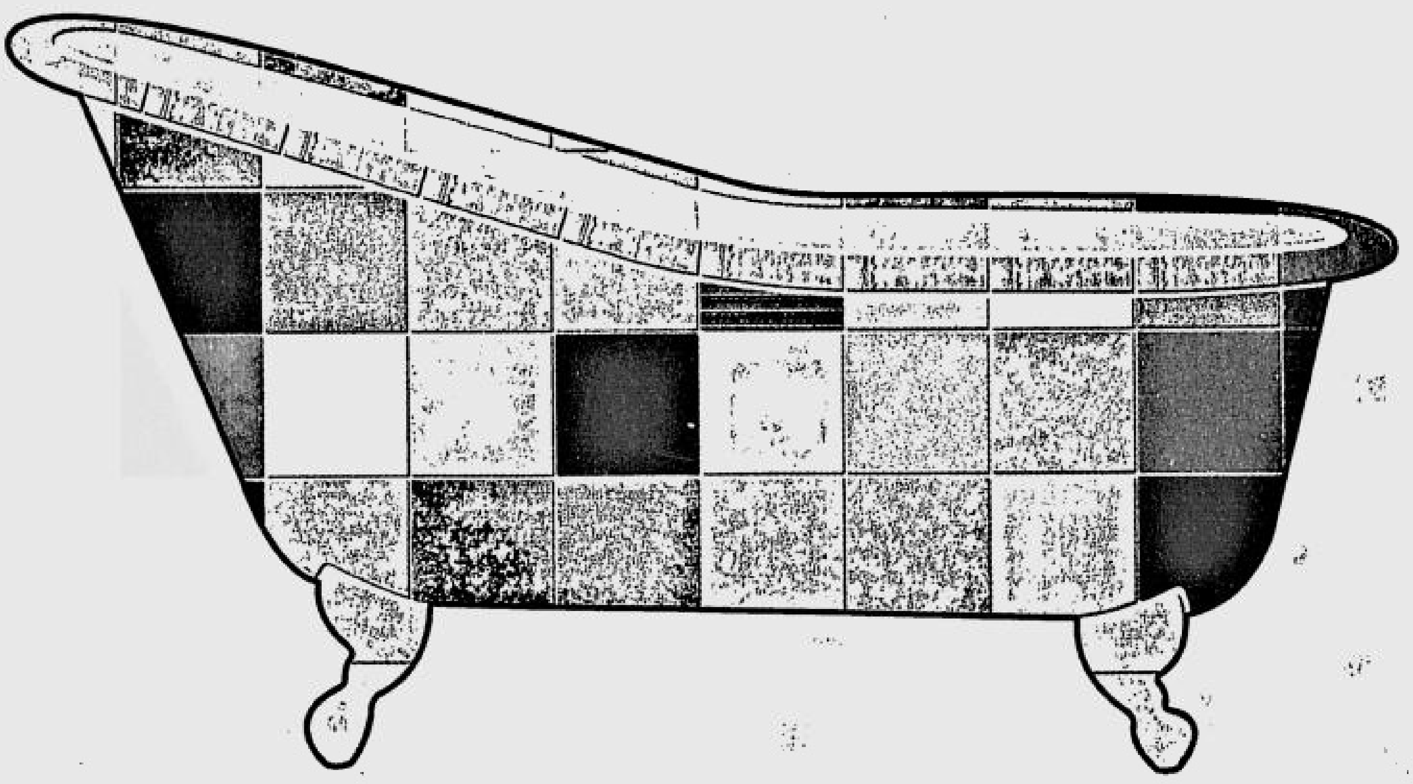

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Ex-US execs still believe Webb innocent

By Norman Bordadora

FIVE years after his conviction for the rape-slay of 18-year-old Carmela Vizconde and the killing of her mother and younger sister, US officials in the country at the time of the massacre and trial still believe Hubert Webb is innocent.

The top US Federal Bureau of Investigation official in Manila in 1995 continues to support Webb's appeal of his 1999 conviction before the Supreme Court.

Another former American official in Manila likewise told the INQUIRER that US Embassy officials, including then Ambassador John Negroponte, were frustrated at the way evidence gathered by the FBI on Webb's whereabouts in 1991 were falling by the wayside during the trial.

"The evidence that we gathered and provided the Philippine government were so overwhelming that they would have been accepted in most judicial courts," said Robert Heafner, US Embassy legal attaché in Manila until his retirement in 1998.

Heafner was referring to the paper trail Webb left behind in California in 1991-92. The evidence turned over by the FBI to the Department of Justice in Manila were certified by no less than then US Secretary of State Madeline Albright and US Attorney General Janet Reno.

Heafner himself was not a second-hand source of information. He was part of the FBI team that uncovered, together with the Philippine government, the plot to assassinate Pope John Paul II in Manila in 1995.

"From 1991 to 1995, I did all the stuff, checking with the FBI in Los Angeles and US Immigration on Webb's whereabouts," Heafner said in an interview.

He told the INQUIRER he personally oversaw the tracking of Webb's trail in the US as early as 1991 when then National Bureau of Investigation Director Alfredo Lim and then NBI Assistant Director Epimaco Velasco sought his assistance in connection with the massacre investigation.

US immigration records presented in the court of then Parañaque City Judge Amelita Tolentino showed that Webb arrived in San Francisco on March 9, 1991 and departed from Los Angeles on Oct. 26, 1992.

"This was the reason the NBI shelved the angle involving Webb. Fred Lim and Epi Velasco were firmly convinced that Hubert was not involved," Heafner said.

"The NBI set aside the involvement of Webb until 1995, when Jessica Alfaro came along," he said.

Heafner said then NBI directors Arturo Aragon and, upon the latter's death, Mariano Mison asked for another round of verification from the FBI in Manila.

He said that among those who were growing frustrated over the matter was Ambassador Negroponte, who called then Sen. Freddie Webb, Hubert's father, about the Philippine government's receipt of a note verbale containing Albright and Reno's certification that Hubert had entered the US in 1991 and didn't leave until 1992.

In a separate interview, the elder Webb told the INQUIRER that Negroponte himself had called to inform him about the diplomatic note on Hubert's US immigration records.

"And one more thing. President Fidel Ramos himself knew about the note verbale," Webb said.

"President Ramos said Negroponte himself showed him the note verbale on board the (presidential yacht) Ang Pangulo," the ex-senator said.

Then Foreign Secretary Domingo Siazon was among those who testified in court about the note verbale.

2 NPA rebels killed, militiaman hurt

TWO COMMUNIST rebels were killed and a pro-government militiaman was wounded in a gun battle in the southern Philippines, the military said Sunday.

The fighting occurred when troops ran into a group of 20 New People's Army guerrillas in Davao del Norte province on Saturday, military Southern Command spokesperson Lt. Col. Renoir Pascua said.

The NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, has been stepping up attacks in the countryside ahead of the May presidential polls. The communists have been extorting money from politicians campaigning in rebel-held areas. *AFP*

NIGHT VISION

A Philippine Air Force gunner tests the new night vision goggles acquired under the United States military assistance package to the Philippines. PAF personnel have started using the goggles in their sorties against Muslim rebels in Mindanao. PNA

Troops kill 2 Abu Sayyaf bandits; hostage beheaded

ZAMBOANGA—Troops raided a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang and killed two of the gunmen, the military said Sunday, also announcing that the gang had beheaded a hostage.

Troops launched the raid on the rebel camp in southern Jolo island late Saturday after months of surveillance, said local army chief Brig. Gen. Alexander Yapching.

The offensive was carried out a week after Abu Sayyaf rebels killed a Marine soldier and wounded 12 others in Jolo's Patikul town.

"This is the result of our long surveillance operation against the Abu Sayyaf," Yapching told reporters.

"We have intensified the government offensive against the Abu Sayyaf group in Jolo," he said.

The Abu Sayyaf has been described by both the Philippine and US governments as a terrorist organization with links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network.

It has been blamed for a series of bombings and abductions of foreigners in recent years, including the kidnapping deaths of two US nationals seized in 2001.

Meanwhile, the military said belated reports from the field said the Abu Sayyaf kidnapped a Muslim woman and beheaded her on suspicion she was spying for the government in nearby Basilan island.

The remains of Abduka Amil, however, have not been recovered, the military said, as it condemned the gruesome killing. *AFP*

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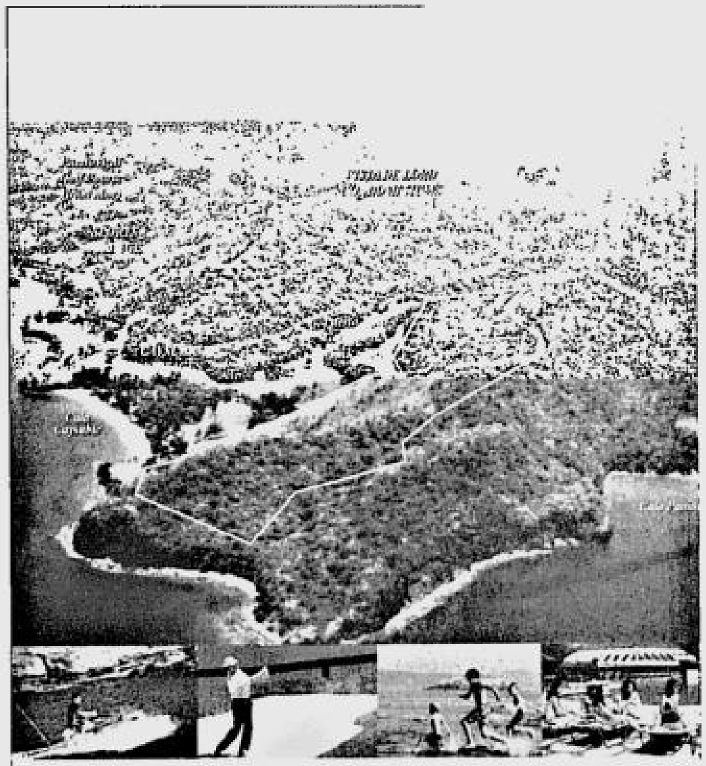

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Hope dims for Pinoy seamen

By Blanche S. Rivera

TWO WEEKS after the ill-fated freighter MV Rocknes, with 24 Filipino crewmen on board, capsized off the coast of Norway, the Department of Labor and Employment has given up hope of any more survivors among those still missing.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said it was "very unlikely" that the 14 Filipino seafarers who were trapped inside the hull of the MV Rocknes, which capsized on Jan. 19 while traversing the Raune fjord en route to Germany, would still be alive.

Sto. Tomas said that it would be practically impossible for the seafarers to survive the freezing temperature of the water and the lack of food for two weeks.

Recovery operations off the southwest coast of Norway resumed yesterday.

Sto. Tomas said the only thing that would make this official was the declaration from the local manning agency, Aboitiz-Jebsen, that the missing seafarers were already dead.

"They're still saying that the rescue operations are ongoing, and the bodies have not been retrieved so the Filipino seamen are classified as missing," Sto. Tomas said in an earlier interview.

Aboitiz-Jebsen has so far identified only two casualties, ROV pilot Jerome Guijo and Israel Cagaanan, whose remains will be arriving next week. One Filipino remains unidentified.

The Filipinos who were missing as of yesterday were Arnold Bactindon, Christopher Alday, Romulus Dingcong, Marife Cave, Marlon Reluao, Cesar Villan Jr., Christopher Marquez, Raynaldo Calma, Gil Juaton, Pepito Delgado, Magno Sartorio Jr., Carlito Nicdao, Sieje Gamez and Abelardo Cortado.

The families of the Filipino casualties would be entitled to receive at least $76,000 from their employers. The $60,000 would cover death benefits, $15,000 for each child for a maximum of four children and $1,000 in burial aid.

The relatives of the Filipino crewmen would also receive around P200,000 in death benefits and P20,000 burial assistance from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

The Norwegian principal would also pay for medical expenses for a maximum of 120 days in hospital confinement and the full salary during treatment.

Aboitiz-Jebsen has flown 31 family members of the Filipino seamen to Bergen, Norway to attend shipboard rites for the dead crew.

Of the 30 crew members aboard the MV Rocknes, 24 were Filipinos. But only eight of them—Charlie Gallano, Antonio Omlang jr, Barlito Madrid Sr., Arnel Florendo, Godofedo Grecia, Ruben Gonzales, Mariano Soloren and Hubert Manginsay—survived.

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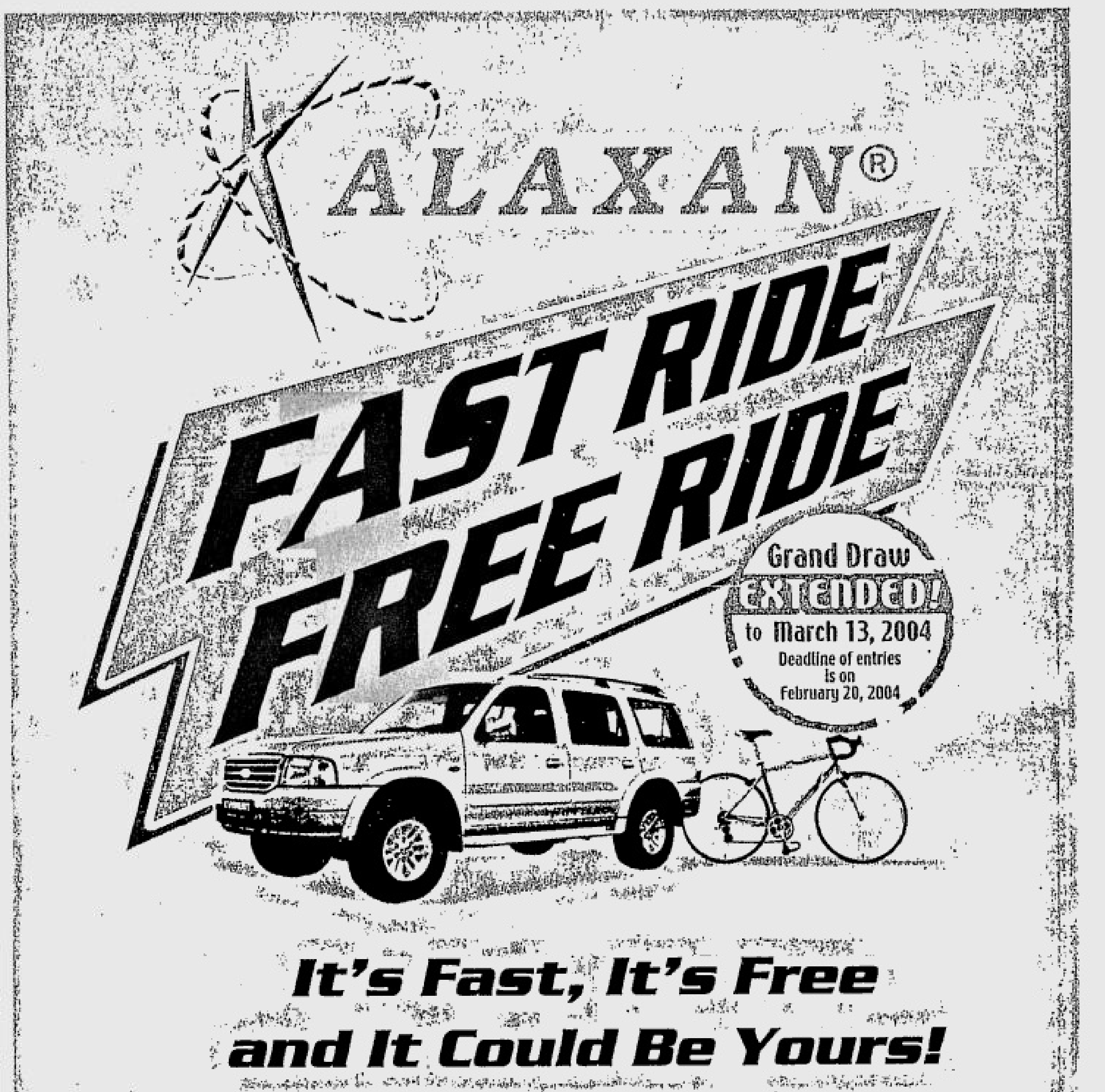
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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Twin suicide attacks kill 100 in Iraq

ARBIL, Iraq—Two suicide bombers blew themselves up at the offices of two rival Kurdish parties in this northern Iraqi city. Kurdish officials said casualties were still being counted but one minister said the death toll could rise above 100.

The dead include the governor of the region, ministers in the local administration and several senior officials, Mohammed Ihsan, the minister for human rights for the Kurdish regional government told The Associated Press.

"These figures are estimates but I believe about 60 people were killed at the PUK and about 80 at the KDP. There are a tremendous number of injured," he said.

The bombers struck nearly simultaneously in this northern city of Arbil, when buildings housing the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) were thronged with guests marking the feast. The PUK and KDP are the two main factions in Iraq's Kurdish north.

US forces had been on alert for violence ahead of the holiday, given that guerrillas have often struck on significant dates against Iraq's US-led occupiers and those seen as cooperating with them.

At least 18 people were killed in attacks across Iraq on Saturday.

The suicide attacks came just hours after US Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz arrived in Baghdad to gauge security five months ahead of the planned handover of sovereignty to Iraqis.

Guerrillas have often mounted attacks on important dates in Iraq: a car bomb destroyed a Baghdad restaurant on New Year's Eve, killing eight, and on the first day of Ramadan in October, coordinated suicide attacks in the capital killed at least 35 people.

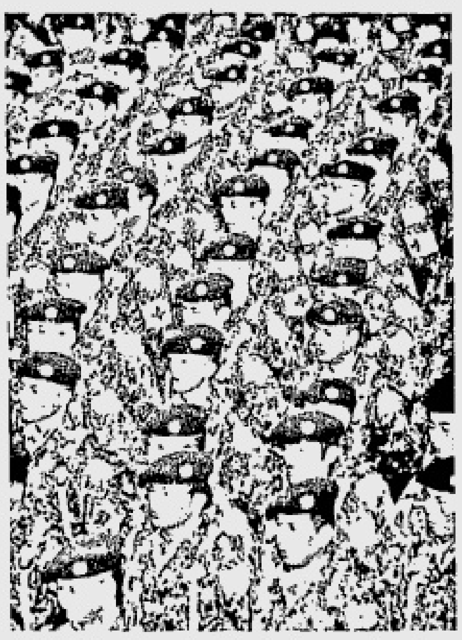
Wolfowitz told reporters he would "assess progress in this country since I was last here." "It's been a very eventful three months that has included the capture of Saddam Hussein, which is a major event for the Iraqi people," he added.

Ahead of his arrival in Iraq, Wolfowitz met US troops in Germany, and dismissed criticism of the decision to invade Iraq on the basis of intelligence that many now say was faulty.

"You have to make decisions based on the intelligence you have, not on the intelligence you're going to discover later," Wolfowitz said.

US-led troops face daily attacks in Iraq. On Saturday, an American soldier died from wounds sustained in a roadside bomb blast west of Baghdad last week, the Army said.

The soldier's death brought to 365 the number of US soldiers killed in action since the start of the war to oust Saddam last March. Including non-combat deaths, 523 soldiers have died. *AP, Reuters*



JAPAN'S soldiers heading for Iraq gather at a gymnasium in Asahikawa city Feb. 1 to attend their send-off ceremony. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told them "you are not going to war" in the ceremony. AFP

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US intelligence community faces crisis of confidence

By Jim Mannion

WASHINGTON—Plunged into its most severe crisis of confidence in decades, the US intelligence community heads next week into what is certain to be a bruising battle over its future in the wake of its spectacular failure on Iraq.

"We are constantly having these 'Oh my God' hearings in the (Senate) Intelligence Committee," Senator Pat Roberts, the committee's chair, lamented this week after hearing testimony by chief weapons inspector David Kay.

Kay's finding that Iraq apparently had no weapons of mass destruction—the prime US rationale for preemptively invading the country—has touched off a furious debate here both over where the blame lies, and on the need to reform the US intelligence committee.

Roberts, a Republican from Kansas, said he will distribute to members of Congress Thursday a report on a committee investigation detailing the shortcomings of US intelligence on Iraq.

Democrats, eager in this election year to explore how the administration used intelligence, have jumped on Kay's advice that only an independent investigation by an outside body will restore confidence.

"We've got enough history to understand that closed orders and secret societies, whether they be religious or governmental, are the groups that have the hardest time reforming themselves in the face of failure without outside input," Kay said last week.

String of failures

Roberts and others have pointed to a string of recent failures.

Some like the Chinese Embassy bombing in Belgrade during the war in Kosovo were directly attributable to mistakes by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Others have involved US intelligence's failure to detect and foil a devastating series of terrorist strikes, culminating with the deadliest attack ever on US soil on Sept. 11, 2001.

Spending on intelligence has surged over the past three years. By some estimates, the intelligence budget is about $40 billion a year.

Although specifics are shrouded in secrecy, the intelligence agencies have said they are pouring resources into developing a new generation of spies and analysts while building up counter-terrorism efforts.

But even after the Sept. 11 attacks on New York and Washington, no leaders of the intelligence agencies have been removed and experts say there has been little fundamental change in the way they operate.

"There certainly has been no radical shakeup," said Richard Betts, an expert on intelligence at the Council on Foreign Relations who served on the National Security Council and on the staff of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

George Tenet, appointed CIA director under president Bill Clinton in 1998, has thrived under a Republican president and survived all previous crises.

Sprawling community

He presides over a sprawling collection of intelligence agencies, most of them controlled by the Pentagon. Besides the CIA, there are at least five other major intelligence agencies devoted to gathering military intelligence, eavesdropping, satellite surveillance and analyzing imagery.

The military services and some government departments operate their own intelligence operations as well.

How such a huge intelligence network—the world's biggest and most technologically advanced—could have been so far off the mark in Iraq is uncertain. But lawmakers wondered whether it can be relied on in other crises, notably in North Korea.

A former top intelligence official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the Iraq failure reflected "the complete breakdown that's been going on for more than a decade now in the analytic capability of the intelligence community." "It is just complete lack of rigor," the official said. "There are exceptions, almost little pockets in the intelligence community that are doing good work. But for the most part, the analysts that are working a hot current topic are just sort of responding to the day's events." "There are whole hordes of people out there and they've got a lot of brains. But they aren't really required to think in a systematic, deliberate way," she said.

"So for example in Iraq, did anybody say, 'Follow the alternative hypothesis'? Did anyone say for example, "Here's an alternative—Saddam Hussein is trying to pretend like he has these programs so the Iranians will think he has a threat there,'" she asked.

"But nobody was following these alternatives. It was all, 'There is a danger they might have these programs, so here is the evidence they have the programs.'" *AFP*

At least 244 trampled to death in haj stampede

MENA, Saudi Arabia—At least 244 Muslim pilgrims were trampled to death in Saudi Arabia on Sunday at the climax of the annual haj pilgrimage, the scene of deadly stampedes in past years, witnesses said.

"More than 50 bodies were lined up and covered on the road.

'They were being taken away," Reuters cameraman Mahmoud Ali said.

The disaster happened after two million pilgrims flocked to Jamarat Bridge in Mena to throw stones at pillars representing the devil.

Police and medical teams said dozens were crushed to death, but could not immediately give an exact figure.

"This morning there was a heavy crush among pilgrims throwing pebbles. Several pilgrims stumbled and some were killed," the state Saudi Press Agency quoted an Interior Ministry official as saying.

Hundreds of thousands of people were walking over and under the 15-meter wide bridge which spans a small valley between two cliffs.

The haj has witnessed deadly stampedes almost every year. In 1990, 1,426 pilgrims were crushed to death in a pedestrian tunnel at the holy city of Mecca.

Police cordoned off the area around the main pillar after Sunday's crush and urged people to cast pebbles from a distance.

Muslims believe the pillar marks the spot where the devil appeared to biblical patriarch Abraham.

"It happened a short time ago. There were people crushing down from the bridge," Egyptian pilgrim Hisham Mahmoud said.

Mena is on the pilgrimage route from Mecca in western Saudi Arabia to nearby Mount Arafat.

Last year 14 people were trampled to death as huge crowds thronged the area. In 2001 at least 35 people died in a stampede at the bridge and 119 died in a similar incident in 1998.

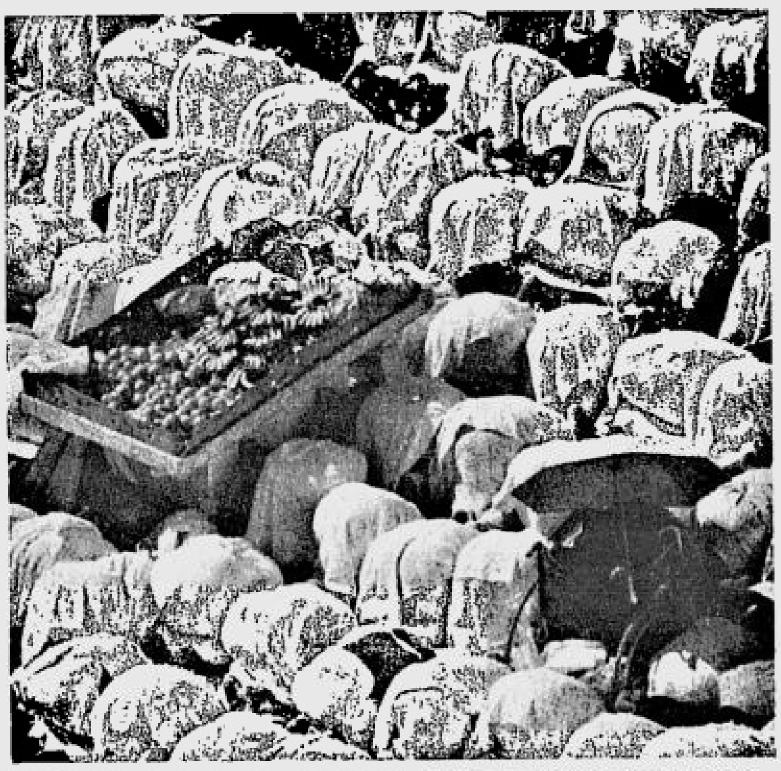
The haj has also seen armed uprisings and bombings.

A massive security operation has been mounted this year.

Thousands of troops have been deployed in the kingdom, a US ally, amid fears of a possible attack by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

Muslims around the world celebrate Eid al-Adha, the feast of sacrifice, on Sunday.

Haj is mandatory once in a lifetime for every able-bodied Muslim who can afford it. Pilgrims begin the ritual by retracing the footsteps of Prophet Mohammad 14 centuries ago. *Reuters*



A CART of fruits is placed next to Muslim pilgrims performing noon prayers at the Namira mosque at Mount Arafat outside Saudi Arabia's holy city of Mecca during the annual haj pilgrimage Jan. 31. AFP

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Mecca sermon slams Israel, Iraq occupiers

MECCA, Saudi Arabia—The imam of the Grand Mosque in Mecca lashed out at Israel, condemned the "occupiers in Iraq" and called for Muslims to unite against those who want to oppress them in a traditional sermon Sunday marking the start of Islam's most important holiday.

"In Palestine the Muslim suffers under oppression and Al-Aqsa mosque buckles under occupation ... how can we live peacefully while our holy lands where prophets have passed are being tarnished by a band of infidel Zionists?" said Sheikh Abdul Rahman bin Abdul Aziz al-Sudais from Islam's holiest site in western Saudi Arabia.

"They (Israelis) are multiplying their aggression every day by building new settlements and seperating walls."

Sudais warned Muslims in his message, which was broadcast on Arab satellite television stations Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya, that the enemies of Islam are everywhere.

His sermon coincided with the first day of Eid Al-Adha, or festival of the sacrifice, marking the prophet Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son to show obedience to God. Abraham is revered by both Jews and Muslims.

Sudais lamented that Iraq, "another part of the Islamic body, bleeds and that the occupant has ransacked it and raped its riches."

"I pray that our brothers in the nation of the Rafideen (Mesopotamia) be governed according to the sunna (Islamic rules)," added Sudais.

The US-led coalition occupying Iraq has promised to hand over power to an interim Iraqi government by June 30.

Sudais called on Muslims everywhere to unite "to defeat all their occupiers and oppressors."

He said Islam is "misrepresented by Western media which associate it with terror." In contrast to Sudais' fiery rhetoric, the message from Saudi Arabia's ruling family marking the Eid was a lot more subdued and brief.

"The meanings of the Eid in Islam are many ... they include uniting the Muslim nation on the good, away from hatred, extremism and terror which lead to mayhem and destruction that Islam has forbade and warned against," said King Fahd and Crown Prince Abdullah in a joint message delivered on their behalf by Minister of Information Fuad al-Farsi. *AFP*

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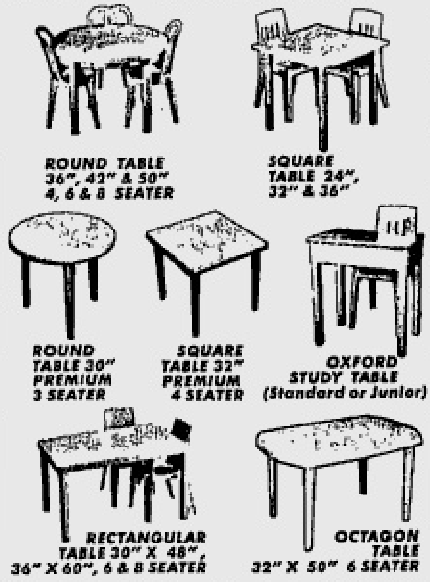
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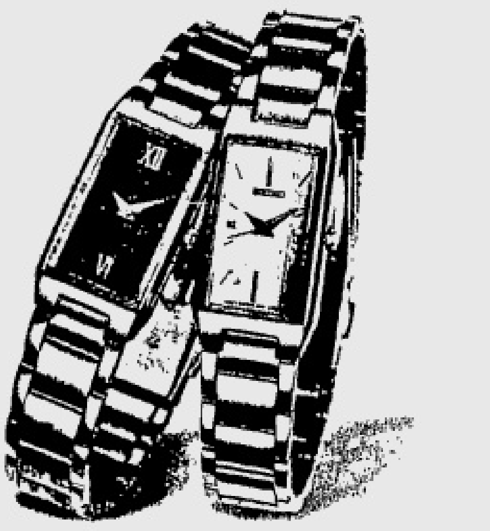

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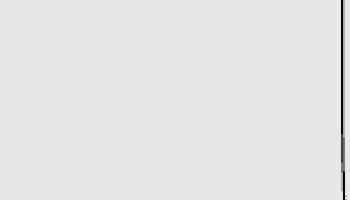

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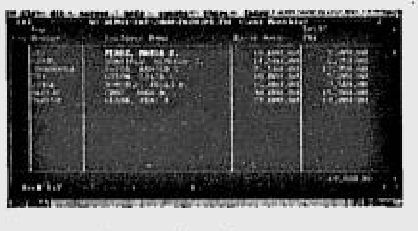

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Biological 'gold rush' threatens Antartica

A "21ST Century gold rush" for Antarctica's biological treasures threatens to overwhelm international efforts to regulate their exploitation, experts warn in a United Nations University report to be released Monday.

Bioprospectors are racing to find and exploit the genetic and biochemical riches of "extremophiles"—organisms that have evolved unique characteristics to survive in earth's most hostile environments, the report says.

"Many scientists believe that isolating and extracting the substances that allow these organisms to prosper could have enormous implications in biotechnology research, possibly leading to new cancer treatment drugs, antibiotic and industrial compounds.

"But in fragile Antarctica this optimism is offset by warnings of significant consequences if an unregulated international 'free-for-all' is allowed to develop," says the report by the UN University's Tokyo-based Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS).

Efforts to exploit this new frontier are now threatening to outpace the capacity of international law to regulate such things as ownership of genetic materials, the issuing of patents and the environmental consequences of harvesting these resources, the study says.

Seven countries have made territorial claims on Antarctica, but no other country recognizes these claims and the frozen continent is administered by the 45-member nations of the Antarctic Treaty.

The UNU-IAS study calls for increased efforts for a global agreement to govern South Pole bioprospecting, which is driven by the billions of dollars in annual sales of commercial products developed from genetic resources or biochemical processes.

The report by the institute's director A.H. Zakri and researcher Sam Johnston is being released in Malaysia Monday ahead of a major international biodiversity meeting in the capital Kuala Lumpur beginning on Feb. 9.

Some 2,500 officials and experts, along with 60 government ministers, are expected to attend the 7th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity.

Although no treaty negotiations involving Antarctica are on the agenda, the UNU-IAS is presenting its report on "extremophiles" to "help foster and support global 'biodiplomacy'." So far, the report says, biological prospecting in Antarctica has usually been carried out by consortia made up of public and private bodies, mainly universities, research centers and biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies.

"This has made it difficult to draw a clear line between scientific research and commercial activities, although it is clear that much of the recent activity has led to commercial applications," the report says.

One of these involves a glycoprotein, which functions as the "antifreeze" that circulates in some Antarctic fish and has a range of potential applications, including increasing the freeze tolerance of commercial plants and farmed fish.

It could also be used to extend the shelf life of frozen food, improve surgery involving the freezing of tissues and enhance the preservation of tissues to be transplanted.

The report says a scan of patent office records in the United States and Europe turned up more than 150 applications for patents involving Antarctica.

Patents already granted include:

- Spain: the wound-healing and skin, hair and nail treatment properties of a glycoprotein extracted from an Antarctic bacteria.
- Germany: An extract from an Antarctic green algae for use in cosmetic skin treatment.
- Russia: The production of biologically active substances with anti-tumor properties extracted from a strain of Antarctic black yeast.

The report's co-author, Johnston, said the Antarctic Treaty System does not specifically regulate bioprospecting or define ownership of the Antarctic's genetic resources. *AFP*

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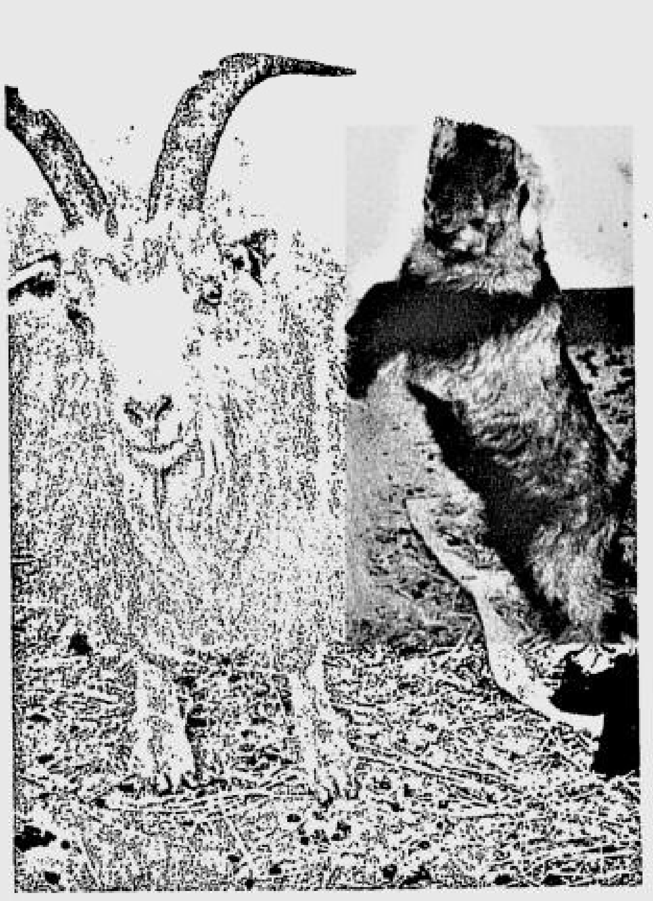

MOTHER AND CLONE

China's first heterogeneous cloned Asian antelope, right, stays with the goat which gave birth to it in northwest China's Xinjiang region, Jan. 30. The antelope, born on Jan. 21, was reported in stable condition. Different from the homogenous reproduction of the world's first cloned sheep "Dolly," the newly born antelope is developed by combining an Asian antelope's body cell with a goat's egg cell, the Xinhua news agency reported. AP

Parents of bird flu victim hit cover-up

GRIEVING beside the body of her 6-year-old son, the mother of Thailand's first confirmed victim of bird flu said Sunday she would never forgive the government for covering up the outbreak of the disease.

"I will never forgive them for this pain," Jongrak Boonmanut said at a Buddhist temple where her son, Captan, was cremated along with a toy car and clothes he often wore.

Captan died on Jan. 26, the first of two confirmed deaths in Thailand from the avian flu that has broken out in nearly half the country's provinces.

The boy's father, Chamnan, said the family's suffering increases with every bit of compensation they receive for his death from various agencies.

"I want to tell them that the money isn't worth it. We want our son back," he said, staring at Captan's bicycle, a toy elephant and school uniforms next to the coffin before it was placed inside the crematorium.

The government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra admitted three days before Captan died that the flu, which was already spreading across Asia, had also struck Thailand. Thaksin later said he had suspected "for a couple of weeks" that the disease had appeared in the kingdom but kept it quiet for fear of sparking a mass panic.

"I will never forgive the government. I regret voting for Thaksin. It's obvious they knew it and even admitted suspecting it," Jongrak said in Phnom Thuan, a town in Kanchanaburi province, one of the country's hardest-hit areas, about 80 kilometers west of Bangkok.

Public Health Minister Sudarat Keyuraphan, who sent a wreath to the funeral service, said Saturday that a total of 14 suspected cases of the disease have been detected. Of these, seven have died.

Captan fell ill after visiting a friend's house where he was given one of a number of dying chickens, his father said. The son took the bird to a butcher to be slaughtered for consumption.

The boy was admitted to a local hospital on Jan. 9, then transferred to Bangkok's Siriraj Hospital where he was placed in the intensive care unit on Jan. 14 with high fever. His condition began to deteriorate dramatically two days before his death.

About 300 mourners gathered in the temple compound. They fell silent, except for two grandmothers and Captan's older brother, who wept when the coffin was carried three times around the crematorium shrine before being burned.

"He was strong and full of energy. We didn't expect him to die so soon," said Chamnan, a farmer and local politician. "I still hoped he would recover even on the day the doctor told us it would be his last day. Had the government admitted it and taken fast action, he wouldn't have died like this." *AP*

100 Iranian reformist MPs resign over electoral bans

A GROUP of 109 Iranian reformist MPs resigned Sunday in protest over the mass disqualification of reformers from forthcoming parliament elections, and accused hardliners of seeking to install a Taliban-style regime.

The deputies were seen by an AFP reporter in the Majlis building lining up to hand in their letters of resignation to parliament speaker Mehdi Karubi during a stormy open session that was also carried live on state radio.

In a joint statement read out by prominent reformist MP Mohsen Mirdamadi, the deputies said they "cannot continue to be present in a parliament that is not capable of defending the rights of the people and which is unable to prevent elections in which the nation cannot choose their representatives. They are in the process of removing the republican aspect from the Islamic republic, and installing an Islam comparable to that of the Taliban," the statement said in a cutting comparison of Iranian conservatives to Afghanistan's ousted Taliban militia.

The hardliners behind the mass barring of election candidates from the Feb. 20 polls were also labelled as "traitors."

"We will not participate in this election," the deputies wrote in their statement, adding that "anyone who wishes well for the Islamic republic will not be ready to organize such an election." Karubi then announced he had received 109 resignations from MPs in the 290-seat chamber.

In a symbolic move, the resignations coincided with the hour and day of the return from exile 25 years ago of Iran's revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

The crisis was sparked when the 12-member Guardians Council, an unelected body that screens all laws and candidates for public office, barred thousands of candidates from contesting the polls. Most of those disqualified are reformists. *AFP*

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Pakistan sacks 'father' of its nuclear program

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Khan's fate is a sensitive issue in Pakistan, where he is revered as the "father" of the country's and the Islamic world's atomic bomb, seen by many Pakistanis as a vital deterrent to nuclear rival India.

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The military repeated earlier statements from Musharraf that rogue scientists operating without official sanction must be blamed for any illegal proliferation of nuclear secrets.

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"The government condemns and distances itself in categorical terms from individual acts of indiscretion in the past."

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The Pakistani investigation is nearing a conclusion. Khan, several of his colleagues and former military officers were questioned in recent weeks after a UN nuclear watchdog began looking into links between Pakistan's nuclear program and those of Iran and Libya.

Reuters

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AFP

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"There was specific credible threat information that was shared with some foreign governments, including the British and French governments, and the decisions were made to cancel these flights," a Homeland Security Department source, who asked not to be named, said.

"We remain concerned about al-Qaida's desire to target international aviation."

The source said there were no plans to raise the US threat level from "elevated," where it has been since Jan. 9.

Air France canceled Paris-to-Washington flights Sunday and Monday, hours after British Airways canceled its London-to-Washington flights Sunday and Monday and a London-to-Miami flight Monday.

In addition, Air France canceled two Washington-to-Paris flights, both the return trips for the canceled Paris-to-Washington flights.

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The source said there were no plans to raise the US threat level from "elevated," where it has been since Jan. 9.

Air France canceled Paris-to-Washington flights Sunday and Monday, hours after British Airways canceled its London-to-Washington flights Sunday and Monday and a London-to-Miami flight Monday.

In addition, Air France canceled two Washington-to-Paris flights, both the return trips for the canceled Paris-to-Washington flights. *AFP*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2004
ISSN 0116-2642
INQUIRER
Vol. 19 No. 56
Email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph website: http://www.inq7.net

OPINION

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.

Publisher **Isagani Yambot**
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EDITORIALS

Media nation

DOES the media have the power to determine who the country's next president is? The question—in all its arrogance and innocence—dominated many of the discussions marking the so-called media summit held over the weekend.

The question acquired greater urgency when news of the latest Social Weather Stations survey arrived right in the middle of the conference. The report that movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. had increased his share of the probable vote from 25 to 36 percent sharpened the edge of the discussions.

But if there were any journalists for whom the answer was unreservedly in the affirmative, they did not speak up. The notion that the news media could shape public opinion enough to determine who the next president is, or to have stopped the election of Joseph Estrada in 1998, came under attack right from the first session.

To be sure, the sense of frustration that drove many to raise the question in the first place did not mean that a stop-Poe agenda animated the conference. On the contrary, journalists balked at the idea that it was the media's mission to place one candidate rather than another in Malacañang.

But does the media, in fact, have that kind of power? The question is all-important, because the nature of that power determines the nature of the responsibility that comes with it.

The media has the power of access, often misused and turned into an instrument of intimidation. It also mainly employs the power to inform and instruct. These are powers enjoying constitutional protection—not least because the framers of the Constitution view the media as a countervailing power. (The provisions on free speech and a free press, understood in the context of the Bill of Rights, are best seen as a limitation on the powers of the government.) But the media does not, by itself, have the power to determine who wins an election.

Given these powers, what are the media's responsibilities?

One school of thought holds that the media's main responsibility is simply to do its job well: to return to the basics, to observe elementary principles of accuracy and fairness, to provide the news but always in context. By "telling it as it is," by providing the public with solid stories that follow the laws of journalism, the media is already fulfilling its responsibilities to the nation at large.

The other school of thought holds that the public the media serves is both a market and a community. Its responsibility to the market (giving consumers what they want) is different from its responsibility to the community (giving citizens what they need). Because of the difference, the media must make a special effort to strike the balance between market requirements and community needs.

Media beat

REGARDLESS of which school of thought journalists belong to, there is a clear consensus that something ought to be done to fulfill the media's social responsibility.

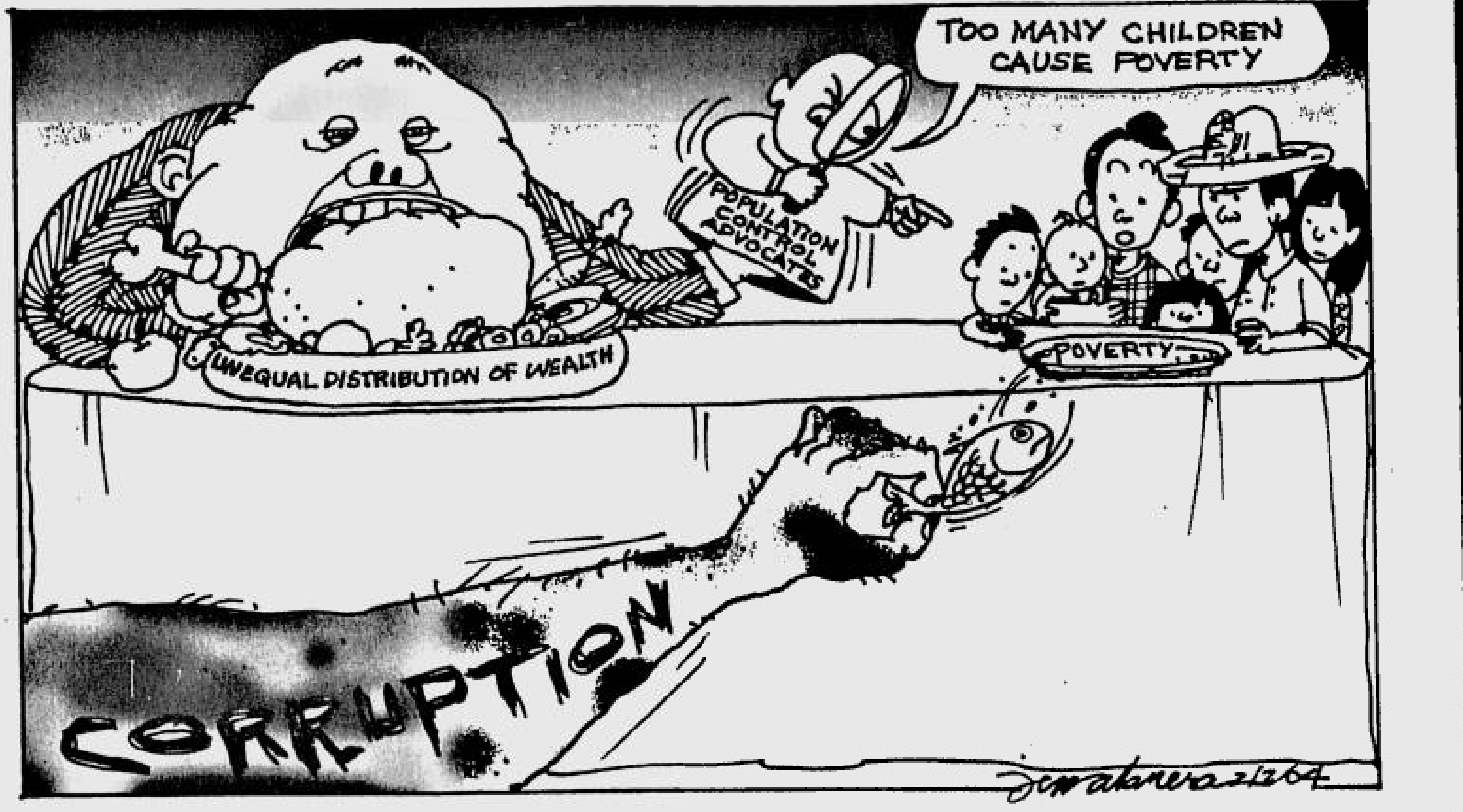
Almost two centuries ago, Tocqueville, that unrivalled prophet of democracy, already hinted at the true nature of the media. The media "constitute(s) a singular power," he wrote, "so strangely composed of mingled good and evil that it is at the same time indispensable to the existence of freedom, and nearly incompatible with the maintenance of public order." (He could have been writing about the Philippine media, often called the "freest press in Asia.")

He was not exactly an enthusiast on the subject of a free press. "I approve of it more from a recollection of the evils it prevents than from a consideration of the advantages it ensures."

But this less than welcoming view did not prevent Tocqueville from appreciating the role that newspapers—what constituted media in his time—played in a democracy.

"Newspapers therefore become more necessary in proportion as men become more equal ... To suppose that they only serve to protect freedom would be to diminish their importance: they maintain civilization." (All he meant by "civilization" was that the "influence" of a free press "modifies customs as well as laws.")

Given this mingling of good and evil, this tension at the heart of journalism, the suggestion that media organizations can begin by considering the media itself as a "beat," as a sector of society to be closely watched and reported on, is both desirable and doable.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CORRUPTION
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GMA prods NWRB to prevent water shortage

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

I MUST have been thinking too much of the Social Weather Stations survey in which Fernando Poe Jr., Sen. Noli de Castro, and actor Bong Revilla topped their respective categories such that I had a terrible nightmare last night. I dreamed that FPJ became our president, De Castro our vice president, and Revilla, being the senatorial topnotcher, was elected Senate president. Rep. Jose de Venecia was reelected Speaker of the House. Can you imagine a more horrible dream?

In my dream (nightmare actually), a civil society leader and a military officer were talking.

"What are we going to do?" said the civil society leader, "FPJ has been elected president."

"Never mind," said the officer, "we can always have an Edsa IV and change him."

"But the vice president is Noli de Castro."

"We'll have an Edsa V and change him, too."

"The next in line is the Senate president and that's Bong Revilla."

"Then an Edsa VI will replace him with the Speaker."

"But the Speaker is Joe de Venecia."

"*Siyanga ano*," said the officer. "We do have a big problem."

It was at this point that I mercifully woke up in a cold sweat.

* * *

I woke up to a bright cheery morning to see the newspaper stories telling that if former Sen. Raul Roco were to withdraw in favor of President Macapagal-Arroyo, their combined votes can overcome the 36 percent rating of FPJ. Two political analysts said GMA should negotiate with Roco to withdraw. Many years ago, her father, Diosdado Macapagal (if I remember right), also negotiated with popular movie actor Rogelio de la Rosa to withdraw in his favor. The latter did and Macapagal won.

I've been thinking about this, too, and now I'm afraid to go to sleep. I might have another nightmare in which GMA will negotiate with Roco and he might turn her down.

* * *

The irony is that despite the drop in the exchange rate of the peso against the dollar and the rise in the prices of oil products and other commodities and all the moaning and groaning, the economy is doing well under GMA. During an interview after she swore into office the officers of Plaridel, a new association of veteran journalists, the President revealed that the Gross National Product grew 4.5 percent last year, double that of the previous administration.

Moreover, she said she provided three million new jobs (whereas Erap provided only one million), thus whittling down the 4 million unemployed to only 1 million. The President said her priority has been to provide food, jobs and water supply. She took great pains to explain how she provided potable water to communities.

Which prompted someone to ask why, despite repeated warnings of an impending water shortage, the National Water Resources Board (NWRB) refuses to allow a contractor to tap the Wawa Dam, at no cost to the government, to stave off the shortage.

As a backgrounder, Wawa Dam in nearby Montalban used to be Manila's principal source. When Angat Dam was built, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) abandoned Wawa and the steel pipes connecting it to La Mesa Dam rusted away. Every day since then, millions of cubic meters of fresh water just flowed over the dam down the Marikina and Pasig rivers and were wasted in Manila Bay.

The demand for Angat water for power generation, irrigation and water supply regularly outstripped the holding capacity of the reservoir whose watershed is being denuded by illegal loggers. This early, with summer still months away, the water level in the dam is already below critical level.

During a severe water shortage 11 years ago, the San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group, one of the builders of the $650- million Casecnan Dam in Nueva Ecija, offered to tap the Wawa Dam to add to the supply of Metro Manila. It offered to install new pipes, at its own expense, from the Wawa Dam to nearby La Mesa Dam.

The government won't have to spend anything. But for some strange reason, both the MWSS and the NWRB sat on the offer. Almost every year, when a water crisis loomed, the corporation followed up its offer, "complied with all the pre-conditions, submitted all the pertinent papers necessary for its approval, including 10 inches thick of feasibility studies of the project." But the NWRB sat on these papers. It neither accepted nor denied the offer; it just sat on it, not saying anything. It didn't explain why it is sitting on it either.

Even now, with another impending water shortage, the NWRB refuses to explain its inaction for the last 11 years. The 1.6 million cubic meters of water that flows uselessly into the sea every day, enough for 6 million thirsty residents, can relieve the shortage. And it's not going to cost the NWRB a single peso. But the NWRB refuses to do anything, even if millions of people will go thirsty. It has not been doing anything for the last 11 years. Why?

Going back to the question why the government has not approved the rehabilitation of the Wawa Dam, the President replied that she took over as President only three years ago. Still, isn't three years long enough? It would take only three months to lay down the new pipes, more than enough time to prevent the predicted water shortage in June. Can't she prod the NWRB to get off its ass and do its duty? The President said she would, adding that the job would be done in two-and-a-half months. Promise?

Reducing government red tape is one of the President's promised priorities. The red tape in the NWRB is 11 years long, enough to land it in the Guinness Book of World Records.

Logic 101

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

FRANKLY, I don't understand Tony Gatmaitan's logic. He says that as a result of the last Social Weather Stations survey, Raul Roco should quit the race. If Roco does so, he will make it possible for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to win against Fernando Poe Jr. This is so because he and GMA are dividing the votes between themselves. FPJ leads the SWS survey with 36 percent, GMA follows with 27 percent, and Roco has fallen to 19 percent. FPJ's lead, he says, is not insurmountable. If Roco should quit, his votes would go to GMA and GMA should be able to catch up with FPJ.

My objection to Gatmaitan's logic does not lie in his analysis of the survey results. It lies in his premise. That premise is that GMA must run at all costs. It is that GMA may not quit herself. Well, he has a sub-premise. It is that GMA is better than FPJ.

If Gatmaitan is right about GMA and Roco sharing votes, why should it follow that Roco should quit? Why shouldn't it follow that GMA should quit? If GMA should quit, then by Gatmaitan's logic, her votes should go to Roco. If GMA should quit, then Roco should be able to overcome the gap between himself and FPJ.

That is so notwithstanding that Roco now stands only third—at least in that survey—in the running. The conclusion that GMA should quit is in fact the more inescapable.

To begin with, that the incumbent should land only second and a far second to a rival at this late date must testify to the extent of the public's distrust of, or downright hostility toward her. GMA has never topped a survey, not SWS, not Pulse Asia, not Ibon, not even the ones they do in government offices. Not even when FPJ was saying he wouldn't run. She herself clearly saw the low esteem in which the public held her when she declared her intention to not run again in December 2002. That was the only thing that boosted her ratings after two and half years. Her decision to turn her back on her word could not possibly have sustained the public's elation.

Assuming the results of the survey are true, you have to ask yourself what GMA has done over the past couple of months to have risen in the public's esteem. The answer is nothing, or at least nothing intrinsic. Three extrinsic things however have happened that could explain her current standing.

Chief of them is that Noli de Castro has agreed to become her running mate. It won't be enough to carry her to a second term, but it has been enough to give her ratings a jolt. The image that comes to mind is that of a dying patient given an injection of adrenaline. It won't cure him, but it will give him a rush, enough to revive him for a fleeting moment. The problem, as I said before, is that GMA has resolutely pursued a show-biz tack—the Nora Aunor of Philippine politics—to raise her stock since she found out that selling herself as an economist wasn't doing the trick. She can't win with that tack facing a true show-biz icon. But it's too late in the day to go back to economist mode, which her handlers seem to be pitching too, to make her look superior to FPJ.

The second is the flood of money coming from GMA's camp, which is exerting pressure on the value of the peso and which is almost certainly bound to plunge it to new lows after the elections. In the same way Marcos plunged the peso to new lows after the 1969 elections, when he won for the second time—the only Filipino president to have done so. GMA will very likely follow the path of reckless spending without achieving its results. People who signify their preference for a candidate on the expectation of money will not necessarily be there during election time.

The third is Roco's own campaign, which seems to have stalled on two grounds. One is his choice of running mate and senatorial slate. On completely rational grounds of course a case can be made for them—Hermie Aquino is arguably more qualified than either De Castro or Loren Legarda for the second highest position in the land. And the Coalition of Hope's senatorial hopefuls are just as arguably more qualified to be lawmakers than the entertainers and opportunists who populate the other slates. But that is an argument that will take years to convince the public, not five months.

And whatever the reason, Roco has lacked media exposure, the critical—no, decisive—factor in today's elections. Unless he is able to check it, his lack of visibility media-wise may bolster his rivals' propaganda that a vote for him will be a wasted one. That factor may already be at work, if the results of the SWS survey are to be believed.

But unlike GMA, Roco has topped surveys. And that he should continue to enjoy 19 percent of the voters' preferences—again granting the accuracy of SWS' findings—despite lack of resources, despite lack of machinery, despite lack of media exposure, and despite lack of recognizable faces in his slate (except Jay Sonza), must say that he has a better potential than GMA to beat FPJ. Given the backing of the party in power, given the resources, given all the help he can get, he can. Why should he and not GMA give way? GMA simply cannot win against FPJ, period.

That is merely looking at it from the pragmatic viewpoint. From the moral one, which Gatmaitan completely ignores, the logic becomes even simpler. Who better represents Edsa II, the force that made GMA the incumbent in the first place—GMA or Roco? GMA, who hid under the bed (Luis Beltran's "figure of speech," which got him a libel suit from Cory Aquino) during the fight against Erap, or Roco, who figured prominently in his impeachment trial? GMA, who has flung the doors open to the very people Edsa II overthrew, or Roco, who has hewed to the straight and narrow notwithstanding its cost in cheap appeal?

Something to think about in Logic 101.

Hard to argue against ₱60B savings

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SENATE and the House are tangling over the proposed P863-billion budget for 2004. It has to be approved before Congress adjourns session on Feb. 6 to prepare for the May elections. The law provides that if no new budget is passed, the preceding year's budget automatically applies. The Senate is pushing for the passage of the 2004 budget. The House, led by Speaker Jose de Venecia, does not want it and instead wants to reenact last year's budget of P803 billion."

The new budget should have been threshed out in the bicameral conference committee earlier last week, but the House members did not attend it after an earlier caucus showed that the majority of them were not agreeable to passing a new budget. This has drawn a protest from the senators, led by Senate President Franklin Drilon and Sen. Manuel Villar, finance committee chair, who brought the impasse to President Macapagal-Arroyo. She promised to mediate the budget row but the House seems to be standing firm.

* * *

The House members say they want the old budget to save the nation P60 billion and thus help cut down the current budgetary deficit. If the P863-billion budget for 2004 is passed, they insist, this would shoot up the deficit to more than P230 billion, which could mean a "fiscal crisis" by the second quarter of this year. The problem, however, say the senators, is that the 2003 budget does not contain funding for the May elections, triggering allegations from opposition senators that the administration is not interested in passing the new budget as it does not want elections this May. But Speaker De Venecia shoots this down by saying that the excellent balancing of last year's budget by the administration, under the aegis of Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, has resulted in savings of P6 billion, which is more than enough to fund the elections. Definitely, says De Venecia, the May elections will go through.

Opposition senators, however, are not convinced. They argue that reenacting the old budget leaves it open to realignment by the Palace in aid of GMA's election. But House members sneer that under the law the Palace may realign the new budget as well, so why not save P60 billion?

* * *

In this election season motives are held suspect. Some senators suspect the House is sitting on the new budget in retaliation for the Senate's long inaction on the House initiative to effect Charter change. On the other hand, the House members allege that the real reason the senators want that new budget is that it would automatically release their individual P200-million pork barrel, which is fatter than the P70 million the representatives get. Whereas, under a reenacted budget, they have to line up at the Palace for projects, something the opposition does not relish from an administration thought to be realignment-prone. The House members allege that with all the "No-el" talk; the senators are just out to blackmail the Palace into giving in on the 2004 budget. But don't the House members have to line up, too? They have to, said one House insider, but the difference is that most House members are aligned with the Palace, hence negotiating pork releases may not be much of a problem for them.

While some citizens continue to be spooked by prospects of "No-el," to my mind the House pitch about the P60 billion savings and averting a fiscal crisis is a convincing line for the old budget—it's hard to argue against savings. Ask any housewife: it's wise to tighten belts to avert the bigger crisis of over-spending.

* * *

The governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, Dr. Parouk Hussin, 59, the only Muslim candidate in the Macapagal senatorial lineup, feels challenged by what he can do for his region in the Senate, given his international connections from 20 years of working in Libya and Sweden as a volunteer medical doctor in exile and as representative of the MNLF in international forums for many decades, coupled with his intimate knowledge of problems in Mindanao and the ARMM. In a lunch with media women and in the dzRH program I co-host with Cecile Alvarez, Hussin, who also holds a master's degree in public health from the UP, noted that less than half of Mindanao is energized, and only 23 percent of its barangays have potable water. It is also bedeviled by poor education and health, with the ARMM getting only half of the public expenditures that other regions receive in these fields, despite having the highest maternal and infant mortality in the country.

To Hussin, the relationship of Mindanao to the country is clear: for as long as Mindanao is not developed, there can be no progress for the Philippines. Right now, the No. 1 problem that hinders development of Mindanao, he opines, is peace and order, but this is very much related to government ignorance and neglect as well as to centuries of mistrust and misunderstanding between Christians and Muslims. Hussin, the MNLF foreign minister from 1976 up to 1995, (he chaired the MNLF panel that negotiated the Tripoli Agreement in Manila in 1976), says he could be "the bridge" to better understanding between the two peoples in Mindanao as "I consider myself a good Muslim" who has worked well with Christians.

* * *

Why did he choose to run for senator under the K-4 ticket? Hussin said the President asked him to represent the Muslim population and he was just happy to do so as he is convinced of GMA's sincerity in uplifting Mindanao. He said he has accompanied her and her Cabinet officials in visits to various ARMM areas, including the remotest islands in Sulu, as GMA wanted to personally see the conditions of the Badjaos there, "despite the fact that those people are not even registered voters."

'Thirst for death'

Kris-Crossing Mindanao

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

WHILE channel-surfing late Thursday night, I ended up switching between GMA's "Debate" and ABS-CBN's "Dong Puno Live." Both channels featured very emotional and heated discussions on the issue of death penalty. Relatives of crime victims and representatives of rights advocates, anti-crime watchdogs, politicians, students, academicians and the *masa* were there. The shows reminded me of the mixed feelings I had more than a year ago on that issue.

On Jan. 6, 2002, a heinous crime court in Davao City convicted A.M. for robbery with homicide and sentenced him to death. A.M. was a member of a group that "massacred" two sisters and a house-help during a robbery. His four other co-conspirators however are still at large. When the death sentence was pronounced, I saw A.M. shaking and murmuring, protesting his innocence.

As the private prosecutor, I was convinced of his guilt. Yet, just like A.M., when I heard the words "death penalty," I was dumbfounded. As an anti-death penalty advocate, it was for me a very awkward moment.

On the other hand, my clients, the parents of the victims, were jubilant that justice had been done. Apparently they noticed my reactions when the sentence was read. I explained to them my personal convictions on death penalty. Over lunch, we had a spirited talk. The victims' father, a devout Catholic, admitted that it is against his religious conviction to wish for one's death. But, he added, the senseless loss of his two daughters in 1999 drained him emotionally. He said his views may change later, but that day he was just pleased that A.M. was already a candidate for lethal injection.

His wife, though, said that a conviction of their children's killers was enough for her.

In last Thursday's television debates, the pro-death penalty camp repeated the decades-old argument that the death penalty is a deterrent to crimes. Others went to the extent of accusing the pro-life camp of being "criminal lovers." Notwithstanding the emotionally charged exchanges, nothing can hide the fact that after the execution of seven convicts, the "crime-deterrent claim" appears to be a fallacy. The government's own statistics show a continuing upsurge of criminality. More than a thousand convicts are currently on death row, including 29 women and seven minors.

Indeed, a decade after the death penalty was re-imposed on Jan. 1, 1994, this may be the opportune time to rekindle a serious and wide-ranging debate on the issue. This is one issue that should also define the way by which a candidate must be measured—from the position of the president down the line. So far, among the presidential candidates, only former Education Secretary Raul Roco and actor Fernando Poe Jr. have declared their categorical stand against the death penalty. President Macapagal-Arroyo, while professing to be a devout Catholic and pro-life, already had a change of heart. The de facto moratorium on execution, imposed by former President Joseph Estrada in March 2000 in observance of the Christian Jubilee Year, has been lifted by Ms Macapagal, who is apparently anxious of losing the support of business and the anti-crime groups. Incidentally, these pro-death penalty groups being courted by the President are also among the natural constituents of Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

While the Catholic Church is leading the charge in the fight for the abolition of the death penalty, it may be well for the Church to review her stand on "collaborative criticism" with the Macapagal administration, in light of the latter's stand on the execution of convicts not covered by the 30-day reprieve issued by the Supreme Court. It may be well, too, for the Church, particularly the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines led by Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, to exert collective efforts and moral suasion among the members of Congress for the passage of pending bills calling for the abolition of the death penalty.

* * *

Ironically, while so much attention was focused by the media and anti-death penalty groups, particularly the Church, to stop the execution of Roberto Lara and Roderick Licayan, very little was heard of the continuing execution of crime suspects by the dreaded Davao Death Squad.

For the month of January alone, nine deaths have been attributed to the shadowy vigilante group. Their victims included two minors involved in petty thief, a youth gang member and a street "barker."

During a rally last Friday in front of the Davao City Police Office, members of the Coalition Against Summary Execution (CASE) heavily criticized the local police and Mayor Rodrigo Duterte for failing to put a stop to the killings despite a huge peace and order budget. Critics has dubbed Davao City as the "City of Death." As of Dec. 15 last year, CASE recorded at least 109 victims, including 11 minors killed by the DDS.

In 2002, CASE recorded at least 60 victims. The killings turned up for last month's Chinese New Year celebration a unique greeting: "*Sa Davao, Kung Choy Fatyon*" (loosely translated: In Davao, if one is a crime suspect, he gets killed).

One need not look deeply to realize the creeping "culture of death and violence." Many people seem to take the vigilante killings as "normal."

As aptly noted by the former CBCP president, Archbishop Oscar Cruz, in criticizing the reinstatement of the death penalty, a government that is incapable of keeping law and order and one that "thirsts for the death even of criminals is not human."

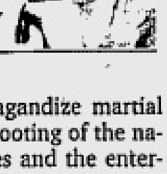
* * *

Comments to karlos_z23@hotmail.com and kar_laws@yahoo.com

Writing off a generation

The Long View

Manuel L. Quezon III



IN THE 10 years I've been writing a column, I've had quite a few chances to interact with public school teachers and their students. Each time the experience leaves me frightened and heartened.

The dedication of the teachers I've encountered is something phenomenal; the innate ability of the students I've met, admirable; these things hearten me.

What frightens me is seeing the handicaps under which teachers and students have to try to teach and be taught. Besides handling enormous classes and dealing with red tape, our public school teachers have to deal with the whims of those running the education department, and playing foster parent to students from broken homes or who live in neighborhoods overrun by poverty, crime and drugs. It has gotten to the point where teachers are increasingly anxious about trying to provide guidance to students, and in particular discipline them, because they could run into problems with parents who do not want their children disciplined or even taken under the wing of their teachers. The effects on students of a society increasingly deprived of hope, and options, in which reality makes the values that schooling is supposed to inculcate besides book-learning, is terrifying.

The teachers who made possible the creation of a middle class from the 1920s to the 1970s are all dead or retired; the generation of teachers they mentored are quietly retiring as well. There is a ray of hope in the fact that there are teachers moving from the private schools to the public schools because the pay is better. But as one person involved in promoting values formation among teachers told me, the problem is that among our teachers, the ones in senior positions now are permanently scarred by the effects of martial law. Martial law politicized the teaching profession in that creativity gave way to the need to bootlick to the leaders of the New Society. It became more important to propagandize martial law than to actually teach; the looting of the national treasury led to low wages and the enterprising leaving the country; the population grew by leaps and bounds but there were fewer and fewer competent teachers left to handle the ever-growing number of students. Since trends take time before their full effect can be seen, we are only now seeing the real legacy of the dictatorship when it comes to education: a country in which the young are increasingly incapable of meeting the challenges of modern life.

The generation I belong to doesn't suffer from an inferiority complex, education-wise, when it comes to those older, and I don't think the older generation looks down on mine as being ignorant in comparison to them. But I have increasingly noticed what people my age have in common with those older than us: a combination of skepticism and contempt for those who are in their early 20s and below. Those who can afford it are abandoning old school ties and putting their children in small schools; those who can't afford it are increasingly despairing about the prospects of their sons and daughters.

Now comes the education department saying that the time has come to stop letting things slide, and that standards have to be raised. The public school teachers protesting this decision have a point in denouncing the implementation of this policy at all levels and soon. The sad reality may be that the generation of kids already enrolled beyond Grade 1 must be allowed to continue under present, less stringent grading methods, because it's unfair to suddenly subject them to standards they are ill-equipped to meet.

As it is, high school teachers tell me frankly that the majority of students who enter high school aren't qualified to do so; and that the majority of those who will finish high school don't deserve to do so. But what do you do? You could push for vocational education in order to give people alternatives: a white collar life or a blue collar existence. The problem is, educators and politicians have been saying we need an equal emphasis on both for over 50 years, and nothing has happened. Even if vocational training is given a big push, there aren't jobs for those who would learn trades; while at least those receiving basic high school education acquire basic skills that might help them become OFWs. The best jobs, the middle class jobs, are almost entirely the stranglehold of private schools, but even their graduates are increasingly losing their competitive edge.

The only rational way to fairly tighten things up is to apply the new grading system to kids now entering Grade 1, and apply it as they move up, and more kids begin schooling. This means the current crop above Grade 2 are condemned to an inferior education; it means, though, there is hope for the generation to follow. This is the sad fate of our country as a whole. The Edsa Revolution babies have to be written off, because they were never given a fighting chance. What I wonder about is whether our society can handle the disappointment and loss of hope that will be felt by millions when the new standards are imposed.

* * *

Feedback is welcome at my home page, www.quezon.ph.

Negative reaction to column items

ONE way by which the Inquirer determines the popularity (or notoriety) of its columnists is the quantity and quality of the readers' reaction to their articles. The newspaper takes these letters into account when it conducts its annual review of the columnists' performance.

Most of the Inquirer's column writers are covered by yearly contracts. If the evaluation shows that a columnist no longer adds value to the subject matter that is supposed to be his field of expertise—for example, his articles are mere rehash of past columns—he will be politely informed of the newspaper's intention not to renew his contract.

Readers' Advocate

Raul J. Palabrica

A similar action is taken if the columnist is found to have used his space to promote his personal interests or malign the reputation of people who may have earned his ire for one reason or another. The standards laid down by the newspaper for its reporters are applied equally to columnists.

Today, I'll discuss the concerns raised by some readers about columnists who, in their opinion, do not live up to the Inquirer's slogan of "balanced news, fearless views." A businessman who was put in a bad light by a hard-hitting columnist wants that slogan amended to read "unfair news, baseless views." A reader said the word "columnist" has the same ring as "calumnist."

This is not to say that columnists do not get positive feedback from the readers. They do, but rarely. I feel an informative or inspiring article does not have the same degree of motivation that encourages a reader to grab his pen or send an e-mail than when he thinks he was unfairly written about by a columnist. It's no different from good deeds being left unnoticed, while evil acts get wide publicity.

Reasons

The Inquirer's Manual of Editorial Policies states that while columnists are expected to advocate a certain point of view, they may not serve as propagandists for any political party or candidate, business interest or any other entity.

Also, when a columnist writes an exposé or an item that has the elements of a news report, he should be held to the same rules on accuracy, fairness and objectivity that apply to reporters.

The complaints I receive about columnists are usually based on the following reasons: the information cited is not true or certain significant facts were omitted; the columnist has a personal or financial interest in the subject matter in question; the side of the other party was not taken or, if it was, was quoted inaccurately; or the column item is a "press release" in disguise.

The question often asked of me by readers and news sources is: What should I do if I feel I was unfairly written about by a columnist?

The first thing to do is sit back, catch your breath and let your emotions cool down. Clear thinking is difficult in an agitated state of mind. Once you have collected yourself, read twice or thrice the item that made your blood pressure shoot up to make sure your initial appreciation about it is correct.

If the name of the source of the "derogatory" information is mentioned or can be implied from the article, check if he really said what was attributed to him or if he was accurately quoted. The same verification process should be done when the item in question refers to certain documents or previous press statements.

Letters

The idea is to make sure your back is covered or you know what you're complaining about before you start railing against your favorite columnist. You may find yourself eating your words if the columnist confronts you with documentary proof of the disputed items in his column.

To my recollection, the people who often get caught in this embarrassing situation are the politicians who have a habit of opening their mouths without checking first if they really lead clean and honest lives.

Let us assume the reader or news source is convinced that a columnist had unfairly treated him and wants his name cleared of whatever wrong impression the column may have created. The next thing to do is write or call (if you know his number) the columnist concerned and give your side of the story.

Ideally, if the issue involves an error of fact, the columnist should write about the correction in his succeeding column and, depending on the situation, explain why he made a mistake or why he does not agree with it. Most of the Inquirer's columnists adhere to this norm.

Unfortunately, there are some columnists who, for one reason or another, one of which is misplaced pride, are averse to the idea of admitting in writing their lapses in accuracy and objectivity. They think (which I do not agree with) the erratum would adversely affect their credibility.

It would help the cause of the person who feels aggrieved by a column article to send a copy of his letter to the columnist and to the Opinion editor for publication in the Letters section of the newspaper. If the letter meets the section's criteria on length (not more than 3,000 characters with spaces), grammar and relevance, the writer can look forward to reading it in the Letters section as soon as space becomes available.

No sacred cows

The Opinion editor acts independently of the columnist or editor of the section in which the column appears. There are no sacred cows among the 72 or so columnists of the Inquirer whose columns are immune from correction or questioning for violation of the ethics of journalism.

Letters that take issue with the subject of columns or raise doubts about the motives of columnists can be published in the Letters section over and above the objections of the columnist concerned.

This policy is based on the principle that the letters are the most effective means of knowing what the readers think or feel about the newspaper and its contents. It's like a pulse reading of the people for whose benefit the newspaper exists.

Besides, if columnists are not required to pre-clear their articles with the editorial staff before writing them, then it is only fair that the readers' comments to columns should be published without the need of obtaining the prior consent of the affected columnists.

The free interplay of ideas within the newspaper promotes quality editorial material and responsible writing.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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Criteria in choosing leaders

MAY I propose a brief layman's guide for choosing candidates for the coming elections in May 2004 based on the following criteria:

A. Moral Integrity
- Honesty, sincerity, commitment to one's religious faith
- Devotion to family, patriotism, concern for the common good

B. Education
- Completion of high school or college or graduate studies
- Academic honors received

C. Experience
- Experience in public office
- Experience in management, administration or operations in private business
- Experience in community services

D. Charisma
- Leadership—the capacity to inspire unity, initiative and productive action
- Authority—the capacity to uphold the rule of law, the preservation of law and order, and equal opportunity for all

Finally, a brief note on popularity. Popularity is due to many factors, some due to (a) values listed above, possessed by the candidate in considerable degree or (b) to extraneous factors such as frequent exposure to the public either personally or through media. Values are certainly valid reasons for choosing a candidate and can be considered as part of charisma.

—FRANCIS L. ARCENAS,
1861 Sagu,
Dasmariñas Village,
Makati City

Some clarifications on 'Sweet' case and AKF

WE write in response to the letter of one Freddie Farres reacting to the news article about "Sweet," a mongrel that was rescued by the members of the International Wildlife Coalition Trust in Baguio City in one of the operations of the Special Task Force Jericho against violators of the Animal Welfare Act or RA 8485. (PDI, 10/4/03)

To set the record straight, Sweet was transported via Emirates Airlines on Aug. 1, 2002 and not via Lufthansa Airlines as shown by Emirates Airway Bill with No. 176-20287630. The Animal Kingdom Foundation representative who gave the information to the INQUIRER writer inadvertently mentioned the name of Lufthansa (we apologize to Marlet Salazar).

Contrary to the allegations of Farres, a Veterinary Health Certificate (Export Permit) was issued by the Bureau of Animal Industry dated July 30, 2002 and signed by Dr. Ronello C. Abila. Further, Sweet was duly inspected by a licensed veterinarian and was found free from any communicable diseases as shown by a Veterinary Health Certificate issued by the Makati Dog and Cat Hospital, all of which were requirements for the transport of Sweet to the United Kingdom. Upon arrival at the United Kingdom, he was kept at the Ladyhaye Int'l Kennels where he stayed under quarantine condition for six months. We are furnishing you copies of supporting documents for whatever purpose it may serve.

Charles Wartenberg, being the president of Animal Kingdom Foundation (AKF) and the chief executive officer of the International Wildlife Coalition Trust (IWCT) with which AKF is affiliated, has been an animal welfare advocate and worker since the 1970s. He founded the International Fund for Animal Welfare (Ifaw) in 1972 and the IWCT in 1989, both in the United Kingdom. His works include campaigns against animal cruelty in festivities in Spain and against seal hunting in Canada. In fact, he had major participation in promoting awareness against animal cruelty and contributed to the dramatic collapse of the Canadian seal hunt way back in 1984; unfortunately this practice is being revived with the emergence of alternative markets for seal products elsewhere.

Wartenberg was likewise involved in other animal welfare campaigns in other countries like Sri Lanka, Rwanda and Greenland. AKF was established in the Philippines by Wartenberg after learning about the dog trade in the country and the manner by which the dogs were killed and butchered in flagrant violation of the RA 8485. The vision and objective of AKF is the promotion, awareness for animal welfare and the implementation of the Animal Welfare Act.

As to the case filed against Wartenberg and some members of AKF, the complaint is a baseless accusation which we will prove false in the proper forum. Beyond this, we refuse to comment further, considering the matter is sub judice.

—MONA LISA M. VARGAS,
counsel for Animal Kingdom Foundation,
11/F Heart Tower,
108 Valero St., Makati City

PR stunts of FPJ backer

JOSE "Linggoy" Alcuaz's PR stunts are glaring indications of the greatest challenge to Fernando Poe Jr. if he wins the presidential election. While Alcuaz claims in the media that he has resigned as a director of the Philippine Charity Sweeptakes Office (PCSO), and poses as a staunch critic of the Macapagal administration, he, until last December, continued to collect salaries and benefits and "religiously" attended PCSO board meetings.

The sad news is that Alcuaz is now posing as a supporter of FPJ. He is obviously playing *"unggoy-ungguyan"* politics to advance his personal interests.

Having no political experience, FPJ will surely have a difficult time recognizing individuals who say one thing but mean another. If he becomes president, vested interests and unscrupulous political players will surely fight to have their pet projects approved by him. FPJ will be deluged by issues, policy choices, numerous and conflicting recommendations. In such a chaotic scenario, how will he run the nation's affairs?

If FPJ's bosom buddy, former President Joseph Estrada, a veteran political personality, bungled his term as a president, I'm terrified to even think about what would happen to our country if FPJ indeed becomes president.

—ROBERTO S. CAPILI,
Brixton Street,
University Hills Subdivision,
Caloocan City

Protect campus press freedom

THE PHILIPPINES has been touted as having the freest press in Asia despite the killings of many media people who have been killed in the exercise of their profession.

Unfortunately, repression against the media hasn't spared campus publications, which are supposed to be protected by the Campus Journalism Act of 1991.

Ang Pamantasan (AP), the official student publication of the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM), is on the brink of another possible closure. A libel case has been filed but we view it as a plain and simple harassment to muzzle the press. In a desperate attempt to claim superiority over our constitutional right, the PLM administration has already spilled its moronic balderdash: "Students should simply follow the rules for they are in PLM to study and not to govern."

The AP, formerly Hasik, was among the student publications in Manila shut down by the Marcos dictatorship.

For years, AP has remained faithful to its mission to protect student interests above all. In so doing, AP caught the ire of the university administration that, just like Marcos, cannot tolerate legitimate dissent.

PLM president Benjamin Tayabas padlocked AP for two years (1994-95). When his term expired, AP was reopened. Suddenly, in 2000, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza appointed Tayabas as president of PLM for another full six-year term.

AP writes about unfair school policies, misuse of funds, harassment of students and corruption, among others. That made AP Tayabas' enemy No. 1. In almost all of his speeches, he doesn't fail to mention his reservations about AP. Many of the past editors didn't make it to graduation because of fabricated cases filed by the PLM administration before the Office of the Student Affairs (OSA).

This is precisely the reason why we would like to appeal to our seniors in the profession to help us in our struggle for a democratic campus press not just in PLM but also in other schools and universities.

In the name of press freedom and justice for the students, no amount of harassment and intimidation can make us betray our duties to the PLM studentry.

—CECILIA VILLAROSA,
editor in chief, Ang Pamantasan,
Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng
Maynila, Intramuros, Manila

Tight airport security measures praised

MAY I express, through your newspaper, which I always read when I visit the Philippines, my highest respect for the security guards and staff of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. They are doing a very good job. Although it took passengers over two hours to get to the departure gate, it was well worth the wait to know that no terrorists were on board the plane. Not one person complained about the wait, in fact, the atmosphere was very calm. We were searched and subjected to X-ray four times. This showed that a good security system was in action.

I must say that it was the most secure airport we went through. Keep up the good work and you will have the respect of all law-abiding people around the world.

—GEOFFREY STEEPLES,
geoffrey@steeples6769.
fsworld.co.uk

In the interest of adopted children

WE write to you regarding the article titled, "After a loss, Miriam home expecting new arrival." (PDI, 01/11/04) Because of the article, CRIBS received telephone complaints from adoptive families and prospective adoptive families who had gone through a strict and lengthy process to adopt a child.

Please be advised that CRIBS Philippines Inc. is a child-caring agency licensed and accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development since 1983. Since its creation, our agency has maintained a strict policy of following the laws on adoption.

Potential adoptive families are not free to preidentify and choose a child on their own from CRIBS. The legal procedure requires that the matching of a child with an adoptive family be done by the Child Welfare Specialist Group, a five-member independent matching committee appointed by the DSWD. Consequently, CRIBS cannot unilaterally give up children in its care for adoption. All this is done to protect the interest of the child.

We wish to clarify this matter to your readers.

—MERCY R. CABRILLAS,
executive director,
CRIBS Philippines Inc., Marikina City

Comelec shouldn't do 'quick count'

THE COMMISSION on Elections is trying its best to cushion the bad publicity brought about by the decision of the Supreme Court to void the contract for the purchase of automated counting machines for use in the May 10 elections. But its latest plan to do a "quick count" aside from its official tally will only create confusion. Let the Comelec stick to its main responsibility, which is safeguarding the sanctity of our ballots.

It is bad enough that the past elections were characterized by *"dagdag-bawas."* This new plan of the Comelec will merely give rise to suspicions that it is up to something anomalous.

Filipinos overseas who are voting for the first time would like to hammer home our concern. Let some cause-oriented and non-governmental groups do the quick count. It is the right thing to do.

—PATRICIO R. MAMOT,
chair and founder,
Filipinos Overseas Watch,
475 5th Avenue, Suite 1701,
New York, New York 10017

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FLU VIRUS CARRIERS?

Public warned on migratory birds

By Carla P. Gomez,
PDI Visayas Bureau
And Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

BACOLOD CITY—Provincial veterinarian Renante Decena on Friday warned the public against coming in contact with migratory birds from China. These are possible carriers of the deadly bird flu disease, according to him.

About 2,000 migratory birds, locally known as *tulabong* (storks), escaping the winter of China have been annually flocking to the mangrove areas of Barangay Cervantes in Escalante town, some 98 km north of Bacolod City.

Faustino Ricafort Jr., barangay chair of Cervantes, said the migratory birds flock to the mangrove area of his village, which is less than a kilometer away from residential areas.

"I am appealing to the public not to disturb the migratory birds from China and to stay away from them as they could be possible carriers of bird flu," Decena said.

"Do not catch, keep, get near or eat these exotic birds," Decena warned.

Ricarfort said the residents of his barangay have been alerted to stay away from the migratory birds.

Cadiz Mayor Salvador Escalante said about 500 storks also annually fly through his city, located some 65.2 km north of here, during the cold season in China. However, residents do not eat them because they have low meat quality, he said.

San Enrique Mayor Jilson Tubillara said migratory birds from China also pass through his town, some 37 km south of Bacolod.

Infectious

Bird Flu or avian influenza is an infectious disease of birds caused by type A strains of the influenza virus, a World Health Organization bulletin said Friday.

All birds are thought to be susceptible to infection with avian flu, though some species are more resistant to infection than others, WHO said.

Migratory waterfowl—most notably wild ducks—are the natural reservoir of avian influenza viruses, and these birds are also the most resistant to infection. Domestic poultry, including chickens and turkeys, are particularly susceptible to epidemics of rapidly fatal influenza, WHO said.

Direct or indirect contact of domestic flocks with wild migratory waterfowl has been implicated as a frequent cause of epidemics, it added.

Patients hit by bird flu develop symptoms of fever, sore throat, cough and, in several of the fatal cases, severe respiratory distress secondary to viral pneumonia, WHO said.

Gov. Joseph Maranon on Friday said he has also ordered a close watch of all airports and seaports in the province against the possible entry of what might be carriers of bird flu.

The worldwide warning against bird flu has been raised after it hit several countries in Asia, including Vietnam, Thailand and China. Deaths in these countries were attributed to contact with poultry stricken with bird flu.

Health authorities in the Philippines have, however, assured that the country is free of bird flu and its supply of dressed chicken is safe for consumption.

Decena said Negros Occidental has enough supply of locally raised dressed chicken.

In the City of San Fernando, government foresters on Thursday set out to capture samples of migratory birds in three Central Luzon wetlands for tests to determine if these are likely carriers of the avian flu that has affected at least 10 Asian counties.

Regidor de Leon, regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the DENR is conducting the tests after it completed its annual waterbird census recently. The census was taken at the Candaba Swamp in Arayat and Candaba towns in Pampanga, Puerto Rivas in Balanga City, Bataan, and Paitan Lake in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija from Jan. 10 to 25.

The census, he said, is a tool to monitor the population of waterbirds and the status of wetlands. It was simultaneously undertaken in Africa, Europe, Central and West Asia, and Latin America under the auspices of the International Waterbird Census.

The Central Luzon census identified the following migratory birds in the three sites: intermediate egret, common tern, great egret and little egret in the Candaba Swamp; brown-headed gulls, little egret, intermediate egret, great egret, common tern, black-naped tern, whiskered tern, common sand piper and little tern in Puerto Rivas; and little egret, intermediate egret and great egret in Paitan Lake.

These and local waterbirds totaled 14,471, mostly in Puerto Rivas, according to the report of Rogelio Trinidad, regional director of the DENR's protected areas and wildlife section.

During winter, these birds leave for the tropics, temporarily seeking wetlands for breeding, nesting and feeding.

Flight path

Their flight paths include Asian countries where the bird flu virus has been detected, De Leon said.

He said the bird samples would be taken to the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau for laboratory analysis.

It was not clear if the government has the facilities to test avian flu virus or if it was tapping the World Health Organization for assistance in the tests.

Candaba Swamp, a major flood basin in Central Luzon, seemed to be the most significant site for avian flu check. According to the Haribon Foundation, "no other site in the Philippines has been known to support a large concentration of *Anatidae* (ducks, geese and swans)." Haribon said that in 1982, some 100,000 ducks were observed in a single day in the Candaba Swamp.

The swamp's main area is an impoundment of about 300 hectares. Local officials said these are comprised mostly of privately owned rice farms and fishponds.

In a related development, Victor Jose Luciano, Clark Development Corp. executive vice president, ruled out the entry of the bird flu virus via the importation of chicken through Clark.

Luciano said this was because the import ban for chicken, started in 2000, continues to be in effect.

Gov't issues advisory on 'pinikpikan'

BAGUIO CITY—The government has started guiding Cordillerans about "a proper way" of preparing their ritual chicken dish, called "pinikpikan," as the stigma over the bird flu hitting 10 Asian countries reached the region on Wednesday.

City officials on Wednesday issued an advisory that cautions residents from serving traditional chicken-based dish cooked "in a partial manner."

The regional Department of Environment and Natural Resources had also sent out an alert against bird trapping activities, called *ikik*, in Benguet and Mt. Province. Although medical studies have yet to confirm this, the government is worried about a likely bird flu virus transmission through migratory birds nesting in the Cordillera's forests, said Tepes Dionisio, chief of the regional DENR's wildlife division.

Dr. Florence Reyes, Baguio health officer, said the mystery surrounding the virus and its impact on humans made it more advisable for the city government to monitor the locals' diet.

"Pinikpikan" is served in many side street restaurants and eateries here, she said. But the traditional dish is usually the result of a ritual sacrifice. Native priests and diviners require the bowels of a freshly killed chicken to predict a community's fate. But to do so, they slowly beat the sacrificial chicken to death to allow its blood to coagulate.

The chicken's feathers and skin are then burned before the meat is diced and boiled with sayote and salt.

To most people, "pinikpikan" is often mistaken for "tinola" (the Spanish chicken broth), until they discern a smoky aftertaste.

A LIVE CHICKEN stall owner in Baguio City prepares "Pinikpikan," a ritual chicken stew dish and a popular Cordillera delicacy. TOOTS SOBERANO

"But unlike tinola, the ritual pinikpikan is not required to be boiled continuously for 30 minutes. Roasting the meat is not enough because it does not really burn all of the meat," Reyes said.

She said medical experts have suggested a steady roasting or boiling of chicken meat for 30 minutes, over 60 degrees Centigrade, or for three hours, over 53 degrees Centigrade, to be assured that the virus had been eliminated.

Commercial traders have been selling pinikpikan-dressed chicken, which are beaten to death and roasted using blowtorches, for P80 apiece here.

But local restaurants assured the INQUIRER on Thursday that the pinikpikan they serve are cooked like the average chicken broth to accommodate the tastes of tourists and migrants.

"We cook it well so I don't think there's anymore virus," a cook said.

Dionisio said the government is also worried about the diet of residents in the vegetable towns of Buguias and Kapangan in Benguet or the tourist town of Sagada in Mt. Province, where bird trapping is common.

He said this is the season for ikik because the cold front brings migratory birds toward the mountains between September and February each year.

"We have no records of a huge population of exotic birds nesting in these towns, except for the kingfisher and the shrike, which are common to the country. But the terrain prevents the government from intercepting the migratory birds," he said.

"The birds become food for residents who practice ikik. (Catching migratory birds) has become a hobby to many of them, although we prohibit it," Dionisio said.

He said certain methods of catching actually hurt the trapped birds.

In Sagada, Mayor Thomas Killip said residents in his town would follow the advisory because of the bird flu scare. Killip said migratory birds usually nest at Ampacao village in Sagada.

"(Some residents) resort to this practice (bird trapping) because life is hard. This has been the tradition of those who are into food gathering. But like those who fish for game, ikik had eventually evolved into a contemporary and seasonal hobby," Killip told the INQUIRER. *Vincent Cabreza and Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

77 possible 'hot spots' listed

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Thirty-eight towns and six cities have been added to the list of areas of concern (AOCs) in the Visayas, bringing to 64 towns and 13 cities the number of potential election hotspots in the region.

The Philippine National Police in Central Visayas (PNP-7) said 29 towns and 5 cities in the region were considered as AOCs due to election-related violent incidents in the past elections and another city, nine towns and 35 barangays declared as AOCs due to the presence of rebel activities.

Earlier, the PNP has also declared as AOCs five cities and 19 towns in Western Visayas and two cities and seven towns in Eastern Visayas.

The five cities in Central Visayas considered as AOCs due to election-related incidents of violence in past elections are Danao, Lapulapu and Talisay in Cebu, and Canlaon and Bayawan in Negros Oriental.

The cities of Lapulapu, Talisay and Canlaon are also AOCs in so far as the presence of communist insurgents are concerned. Another city in Cebu, Mandaue, was declared as AOC for the same reason.

The PNP said among the towns declared as AOCs are Cebu's Badian, Madredijos, Minglanilla, Oslob, Samboan, Santander, Sogod, Barili, Carcar, Naga, and Pinamungahan; Bohol's Buenavista, Batuan, Sagbayan, Calape, Dauis, Bilar, San Isidro and Alicia; and Negros Oriental's La Libertad, Mabinay, Vallehermoso, Himalalod, Tayasan, San Jose, Zamboanguita, Bindoy, Siaton, and Ayongon.

Senior Supt. Lani-O Nerez, officer in charge of the regional police's directorial staff and concurrent chief of the regional operations and plans division, said these areas had experienced election-related violence in past elections, including ambush, shooting and ballot boxes snatching.

The towns listed as AOCs due to presence of rebels are Cordova, Catmon and Tuburan in Cebu; Bohol's Buenavista, Danao, Inabanga, Bilar; and Negros Oriental's Guihulngan and Valencia.

Nerez said the cities, towns and barangays mentioned as AOCs due to the presence of the communist movement, meant that rebel forces in the areas could intervene in the elections in these areas.

PNP-7 Director Rolando Garcia said these areas would be tightly watched to ensure that the experience in 2001 elections in these areas would not be repeated in May.

To ensure that police presence in AOCs are adequate, Garcia said the Central Visayas police will recruit at least 450 new policemen by April.

Garcia said the new policemen would be temporarily assigned in the different police stations across the region to do administrative work, while the policemen previously assigned in those police stations would be given field work during the elections.

Garcia said the PNP and the Commission on Elections will assess the list of AOCs weekly to determine if new areas should be added or if any of those already in the list would need to be removed.

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Water lack to affect 480,000 people in C. Luzon, says DENR

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—About 480,000 residents and 1,250 hectares of farmlands in Central Luzon stand to suffer from an "impending water shortage," the regional Department of Environment and Natural Resources chief said last Monday.

Regidor de Leon, regional DENR executive director, said he has ordered foresters to secure the General Tinio (Nueva Ecija)-Doña Remedios Trinidad (Bulacan) watersheds of the Angat River from timber poachers.

He said forestry guards assigned to anti-illegal logging checkpoints in Aurora, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija and Tarlac—all near the boundaries of the Sierra Madre mountain ranges—have been placed on red alert since last week.

De Leon's advice and forest protection orders came as rainfall in the top rice-producing region dropped to 179.2 millimeters.

This amount, he noted in an advisory, was 45 percent lower than the 35-year average of 342.6 mm. He said the water level at the Angat Dam, on the other hand, fell to 201.56 meters.

This current level was 4.75 meters below the lower rule curve, meaning the dam was short of 88.19 million cubic meters of water, De Leon said, citing data from the DENR's National Water Resources Board.

A DENR report shows that the Angat River and the dam provide irrigation to 30,000 hectares of farmland in Pampanga and Bulacan and supplies water to 10 million residents of Metro Manila, the country's capital region.

De Leon's projections on the scale and extent of the effects of the water shortage seemed small, considering that Central Luzon has less than 10 million residents and more than 600,000 hectares of farmlands.

He said even if the state-owned National Power Corp. had taken control of the 62,000-hectare Angat watershed since 1995, the DENR and the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion still conduct forest patrols in the area.

Sources in Bulacan said Napocor employees assigned to the Angat station had allowed their relatives to encroach in the forest by building houses and engaging in small-scale logging.

The DENR held several hearings with the Napocor on this issue last year, it was learned.

In a related development, the Integrated Rural Development Foundation (IRDF) called for DENR intervention against illegal logging in Umiray, located in the boundary of Dingalan, Aurora, and General Nakar, Quezon.

The "unabated logging operations" of the Green Circle Properties and Resources Inc. in the Umiray watershed, a major source of the Angat Dam water supply, had left the area "heavily logged," leaving no more trees of the size required by law, the IRDF said, citing a study by experts from the University of the Philippines in Los Baños.

Umiray residents and representatives of environment groups blamed former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez for "failing to take definitive action" against the company whose timber license covers about 28,000 hectares, the IRDF said in a statement. The company reportedly bought the vast tract of land from the Gopuansuy family. *Tonette Orejas with a report from Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Davao student says she was raped, robbed inside school office

DAVAO CITY—A 19-year-old student of the Ateneo de Davao University was allegedly raped and robbed inside an assistant dean's office on Thursday night.

But the Davao City Police Office was quick to say that the lover of the victim could be behind the alleged rape.

Senior Supt. Conrado Laza, city police chief, said based on their initial investigation the suspect was the victim's boyfriend.

But Laza said since the victim cried rape, then the suspect should be held liable for the allegation.

The victim reported to the Sta. Ana police station that she was inside the room of assistant dean of the Arts and Sciences department at around 7:15 p.m. when a man reportedly sneaked in.

At gunpoint, she said, she was reportedly forced to undress and was sexually abused.

The victim also told policemen that the suspect took her automated teller machine (ATM) card, cellular phone and P600.

Laza said he had ordered an investigation of the incident, which happened despite a strict security implemented in the university.
Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

CESAR VILLA/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

COLLISION
The collision on Saturday of two Victory Liner buses in Sitio Cuayan, Barangay Santiago, Botolan, Zambales left 11 persons dead and 20 others wounded.

Controversial power plant launched in C. de Oro

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Finally, the controversial $300-million 210-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Villanueva, Misamis Oriental had its groundbreaking on Friday.

The groundbreaking ceremony was led by Energy Secretary Vince Perez and Agriculture Secretary Luisito Lorenzo as representatives of the government, and STEAG State Power Inc., the proponent of the project, president Andreas Rubin.

The STEAG assured of the synergy, the co-existence of nature and technology to produce energy, in this project.

A specialist of the top ranking coal-fired power plant in the country like the $1-billion Sual Coal and $750-million Masinloc coal power plants, who requested anonymity, told the INQUIRER that the groundbreaking is not a guarantee that the project will push through.

He said the next thing that will come out would be the Environmental Compliance Certificate.

"A groundbreaking is a groundbreaking, it could do plenty of actions from the proponents to make money," he said.

He alluded to the upcoming elections wherein the proponents could possibly use to lobby the project in exchange for political funds.

Bencyrus Ellorin, spokesperson of Task Force Macajalar, told the INQUIRER that their silence over Friday's groundbreaking did not mean they were not against the construction.

"There is a big difference between being silent and doing nothing. While we may be silent, at least in the media, we are busy doing lobbying work with the assistance of international NGOs, like the Friends of the Earth-Japan," Ellorin said. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Reds see Kawal formation sign of disenchantment

LUCENA CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines sees the formation of Kawal Pilipino as the latest symptom of the deep-seated disenchantment within the fractious military.

Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, described the series of "open armed as well as unarmed defiance by ordinary soldiers and junior officers of the AFP as urgent protest statements of widespread disenchantment as well as deep factional strife within the lower ranks of the military amidst the long-exacerbated systemic crisis in the country."

On Wednesday, Kawal Pilipino has accused President Macapagal-Arroyo of using the Armed Forces of the Philippines "to monitor and restrict the movements" of her political opponents to destroy their chances of winning in the elections in May.

However, the group of soldiers made it clear that it was not plotting a coup against the government, as it stressed that it only wanted to air its grievances.

Rosal said the incident depicted how "the rotten and reactionary AFP is cracking up and bound for defeat."

"The only thing the top hierarchies of military establishment and the reactionary government can ever think of in response to such protests is to try to muffle the protests, prosecute with vengeance those they can lay their hands on, threaten the others and keep on fooling the rest of the bottom ranks in the military as well as the mass of the people," said Rosal.

Rosal invited the aggrieved soldiers and junior officers and their rebel groups or "reform groups'" within the AFP "to get in touch with the revolutionary movement for discussions aiming to reach common views and resolutions in response to the present situation in the military, government, ruling system and revolutionary movement."

He also called on disgruntled soldiers to join the revolutionary ranks, forge possible alliances with the NPA and the revolutionary movement or work clandestinely for the revolutionary movement while remaining in the AFP.

According to Rosal, an increasing number of soldiers have deserted their units recently and have joined the NPA bringing their arms with them. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Ro-ro in N. Luzon

TUGUEGARAO CITY—Cagayan has joined the Northeastern Luzon Pacific Coastal Service (NLPCS), also known as the "Roll-on, Roll-off" (Ro-ro) project of the national government, in partnership with Isabela, Aurora and Quezon. Gov. Edgar Lara said the project would be a breakthrough for Cagayan since it would provide coastal transport services and boost the establishment of ports in Sta. Ana and Baggao towns. The provincial board has authorized the provincial government to invest P10 million in the NLPCS.
Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

New Army division chief

CAMP MELCHOR DELA CRUZ, Isabela—Maj. Gen. Reynaldo Alcasid assumed the leadership of the Army's 5th Infantry Division here on Tuesday. Alcasid, former commander of the 3rd ID in the Visayas, replaced Maj. Gen. Samuel Bagasin who was reassigned to the 4th ID based in Cagayan de Oro City. Alcasid, 55, is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 1971. Maj. Gen. Efren Abu, Army commander, presided over the ceremony.
Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Subic fire guts school

SUBIC, Zambales—A 30-minute fire gutted two classrooms of the Subic High School on Tuesday afternoon. No one was reported hurt. Fire department officials said the school lost about P250,000 worth of property in the fire that broke out at 2:05 p.m. The fire was traced to an electrical short circuit at the ceiling of one of the two classrooms.
Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Farm hand slain

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A farm caretaker was killed while a driver of a local businessman was wounded when they were ambushed in Bagabag town on Saturday morning. Police identified the fatality as Gilcerio Puna, 32. His companion, Dominador Navarro, 25, driver of businessman Jolly Zapata, was wounded after the suspects shot them in Barangay Quirino in Bagabag at about 4:30 a.m. Saturday. Insp. Carmelita Bacena, officer in charge of the Bagabag police, said the victims came from a cockfight and had just brought home their companion, one Binong Flores, in Bagabag when the suspects, on board a Honda Civic car, chased their car. Bacena said they were still establishing the motive and identity of the suspects. *Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Soldier ordered arrested

BAGUIO CITY—A judge in Mt. Province on Thursday ordered the arrest of a soldier accused of killing a farmer in Sadanga town in August 2003. Judge Artemio Marrero of the regional trial court of Bontoc issued a warrant for the arrest of Army Lt. Eduard Sia-ed of the 54th Infantry Battalion. The Cordillera Human Rights Organization said in a statement that the RTC's preliminary investigation showed there was sufficient ground to charge Sia-ed and other soldiers of his unit with the murder of Etfew Chadyaas. Chadyaas, a farmer in Barangay Belwang, Sadanga, was reportedly shot and killed by soldiers while he was tending his farm. Earlier military reports said Chadyaas was killed in an encounter between soldiers and New People's Army rebels in the town. Sia-ed, according to the CHRO statement, denied his or his men's involvement in Chadyaas' killing in a counter-affidavit he submitted to the court last year.
Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Councilor killed

DINALUPIHAN, Bataan—A councilor here was gunned down at the town's public market on Jan. 28. Police said Councilor Angelito Timog, 51, was walking with his wife Emelita in front of a fast food outlet in the public market when three men arrived and one of them shot him. Reports said the gunman was armed with a .45 cal. pistol. Police are looking into Timog's supposed involvement in a bungled business deal as a possible motive in the killing. *Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Top criminal killed

SANTIAGO CITY—Cagayan Valley's most wanted criminal and his companion were killed in a shootout with policemen in Maddela, Quirino, on Jan. 27. Senior Supt. Manuel delos Reyes, Quirino police director, identified the fatalities as Lelen Gumabon, the region's most wanted man, and his aide Salung Kuntawa. Delos Reyes said the police have offered a P200,000 reward for Gumabon's arrest. Reports said policemen went to Gumabon's safe house in Barangay Villa Gracia in Maddela town to arrest him but were shot at.
Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

The GSIS Scholarship Program

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is now accepting applications from qualified incoming college students for the GSIS College Scholarship Program for SY 2004-2005.

To qualify under the program, applicants must be legitimate children of active GSIS members and must have a general academic average of 85% or its equivalent.

The following documents, together with the accomplished GSIS Scholarship Program forms, should be submitted to the GSIS Main Office or to the nearest GSIS Branch or District Offices:
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- Certified copy of their Parent's GSIS policy contract and
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Qualifiers shall take the GSIS Competitive Examination to be administered by the Center for Educational Measurement.

Scholars can choose from among any of the following 4 or 5-yr. GSIS Priority Courses: Accountancy, Actuarial Science, Business Administration, Computer Science and related IT courses, Economics, Engineering major in Computer, Civil, Electrical & Electronics, Electronics & Communications, Industrial, Management and Mechanical only, Finance, Management, Marketing, Mass Communications, Mathematics and Statistics.

Application deadline: 2 April 2004.

For more details, please visit the GSIS Main Office or your nearest GSIS Branch/District Office or contact Emma, Nelda, Meljune and/or Marisa of the GSIS-HRDD Scholarship Staff at Tel. Nos. 551-1878 or 891-6161 locals 4862/4863.

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Contract for Quezon forest revoked; Agta leaders thankful

LUCENA CITY—The tribal elders of the Agta folk in north Quezon thanked their god "Makidipet," for the cancellation of the forest management contract involving 34,600 hectares in General Nakar town.

An order signed Jan. 13 by Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun revoked the Integrated Forestry Management Program (Ifma) that former Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez executed in favor of Timberland Forest Products Inc. on Nov. 12, 2002.

"Truly, there will never be a time that Makidipet will forsake us in times of our needs," Ramsey Estuveza, tribal youth leader, told the INQUIRER over the phone last week.

Estuveza said that upon hearing of the report, the tribe elders immediately convened and expressed gratitude to their ancestral god.

Quezon Rep. Rafael Nantes said, "the decision was a vindication of my honor and integrity." Nantes was once suspected of conniving with the proponent of the Ifma.

"The cancellation of that Ifma was my very first request to Secretary Gozun during her appearance before the Commission on Appointments, not only to clear my name but also to immediately stop the questionable reforestation program that would only bring havoc and destruction to the already fragile and denuded Sierra Madre mountain ranges," Nantes, a member of the Commission on Appointments, said here recently.

"This is a victory of the people who all shared efforts to save and protect what is left of the remaining forest," the legislator said.

The cancellation of the Ifma had been expected in north Quezon after Nantes reminded the issue to Gozun during the latter's visit in Real town last year.

Gozun disclosed before the multi-sectoral assembly that there was a "big chance" that the contract, awarded to Bulacan logger Wilson Ng, would soon be revoked.

In her decision, Gozun said "fraud, misrepresentation and omission of material facts" pervaded the process by which the DENR granted the forest management contract.

Fr. Ysrael Gabriel, parish priest of General Nakar town, said that when the Ifma was approved, "the residents here were not at ease and anxieties prevailed."

"Probably because they realized that the remaining Sierra Madre forest is now considered the last frontier," he said.

However, Estuveza said they are still facing a big battle, the incursion on their ancestral domain of real estate developer, Green Circle Properties and Resources Inc., said to be owned by lawyer Romeo Roxas.

The Agta members fear the project, situated in Dingalan, Aurora and General Nakar, would dispossess them of their ancestral land and drive them deeper into the mountains.

"But we sincerely believe that Makidipet will never allow that diabolic incursion to befall upon our tribe," Estuveza said. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Vizcaya council shuts door to mining

By Melvin Gascon
and Ben Moses Ebreo
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A committee of the provincial development council (PDC) banned actual mining operations in the province, ignoring President Macapagal-Arroyo's recent order promoting mining in the country.

Voting 4 to 1, the six-member PDC executive committee also rejected an endorsement by its economic development committee to promote mining as one of the "investment opportunities" in Nueva Vizcaya.

The move came even as the President ordered the revitalization of the mining sector in the country, following a shift in government policy from tolerance to full support of the industry.

Executive Order 270 outlined a national policy agenda that aimed to promote responsible mineral resources exploration, development, and use to enhance economic growth.

But the latest PDC resolution virtually shut the door to future mining operations in the province, according to Gov. Rodolfo Agbayani, council chair.

"Ongoing explorations may be continued but only until the permits expire. But actual mining operations would no longer be allowed from hereon," he added.

At present, at least three areas in Kasibu town are covered by exploration permits. One area is covered by a financial and technical assistance agreement (FTAA) that covers a big portion of Kasibu, including the ore-rich village of Didipio.

Agbayani said the PDC stand would now make it difficult for investors to initiate mining activities in the province because of the legal requirement on the social acceptability, especially in indigenous communities.

The PDC decision would be elevated to the executive committee of the regional development council, which determines the stand of each of Cagayan Valley's five provinces on mining as an "investment priority."

Jerrysal Mangaoang, Mines and Geosciences Bureau regional chief, however, said they would appeal the PDC committee decision.

"What we are asking is for the entire membership of the PDC to join the deliberations, before they make the decision. This would also allow us (in the mining sector) to explain our side," he said.

Expected to be adversely affected by the PDC move is the controversial application of Climax Arimco Mining Corp. (CAMC) for a gold-copper project in Barangay Didipio in upland Kasibu, some 60 km from here.

Jose Leviste Jr., CAMC-Philippines chair, downplayed the PDC decision. "The vote was made by (the executive committee) of PDC, not the (entire) PDC. (The executive committee) is meant to monitor projects of the PDC, not to be the PDC," he said.

He lamented that the mining company was not given a chance to air its views on the issue before the PDC committee made the ruling.

Earlier, Bishop Ramon Villena of the Bayombong and Quirino diocese appealed to provincial officials to reject the bid of CAMC to extract gold and copper deposits in Barangay Didipio in Kasibu town.

In a letter dated Jan. 21 to Agbayani and members of the PDC executive committee, Villena assailed a decision of the economic development committee to endorse mining as one of the priority investments in Cagayan Valley.

"I personally feel that this resolution will now open the proverbial gates to mining activities in our region and particularly in our province," he said.

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MESSAGES

Greetings to students, faculty, staff, and administrators of San Geronimo Emiliani School in celebration of your 20th foundation anniversary!

The attainment of quality education is not an easy task. It is a journey full of challenges and sacrifices that need to be hurdled as we cope with the demands of our society. We hope that in your twenty years of delivering quality education, you have acquired knowledge and experiences that can help you face these challenges in years to come.

We hope that you will still continue to provide quality education to our youth. Let us help them realize their dream so that they can contribute in our effort to build a Strong Republic.

Best regards!

Edilberto C. De Jesus
Secretary

I thank the Lord for this very significant milestone of the life of our school - the Platinum (20th) Foundation Anniversary.

From its humble beginnings twenty years ago, SGES has now rightfully become one of the leading and well-respected basic educational institutions in the province of Laguna. We have hurdled numerous challenges, reaped countless awards and recognitions, savored excitements, and have remained steadfast in our conviction of providing a high quality yet inexpensive education to the youth.

As the whole school community looks forward to the next twenty years, it is my fervent hope that we will continually, if not, surpass our past achievements for the betterment of our pupils and students in particular, and our immediate society in general.

I wish to greet everybody in the school on our anniversary and I would like to thank all those people who, in one way or the other, have helped organized and put up this grand celebration.

God bless.

Mrs. Benita C. Ifurung
School Directress

It is with great pride and pleasure that I greet the whole school community in the occasion of its platinum foundation anniversary.

The theme for this year's anniversary is: "Suddenly the FUTURE is Here..." This theme embodies the school's mission of providing quality education to our youth in order for them to become productive and relevant participants in the process of nation building now, and, especially in the future. The different activities lined up for this year's celebration all revolve around the promotion of this theme.

The growth of SGES has been a product of the collaborative efforts of all those involved in the school - administration, faculty, staff, parents and students. I believe that the future successes of our school, especially in the achievement of its said mission, may very well depend on this collaboration.

I wish to thank the parents and students, our faculty and staff, the different sponsors and countless supporters for making this foundation anniversary a truly meaningful and successful one.

God bless you all.

Mac J.R. Tancinco
School Principal and Chairman of
SGES Platinum Anniversary

ADVT

Human transmission eyed in bird flu deaths

From page A1

deaths. "At the same time, such exposures cannot be discounted, either."

The two sisters became sick after attending their brother's wedding reception. Their 31-year-old brother died Jan. 14 but was cremated so no samples were available to determine whether he also had bird flu.

The sisters, whose identities have not been released, were admitted to the Institute of Clinical Research for Tropical Medicine on Jan. 13 and they died Jan. 23.

Avian influenza has swept through Asia, infecting millions of chickens in at least 10 countries. Thailand has reported two confirmed human deaths. Governments have been scrambling to destroy the infected birds in a bid to contain the epidemic's spread.

There were instances of limited human-to-human transmission of the H5N1 virus during an outbreak of bird flu in Hong Kong in 1997 which killed six people. But that outbreak never developed into a significant public health threat.

More cases

Even so, more cases of the deadly bird flu virus erupted in Asia over the weekend, prompting new measures to contain the disease.

In China, where two new suspected outbreaks were reported Saturday, authorities worked feverishly to contain the disease as the WHO warned further cases could emerge in the days ahead.

Officials ordered the killing of chickens, closed down poultry markets and stepped up surveillance, as the WHO urged speedy measures to curb the virus which is now either confirmed or suspected in six regions of the vast country.

"It's entirely conceivable that there could be more cases among poultry populations," said Roy Wadia, a Beijing-based WHO spokesperson.

"It seems to be spreading very fast. Time is of the essence, and you have to keep up with the outbreak," he said.

A THAI student looks at the model of a chicken displayed at the University of Bangkok. Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra moved Sunday to assure the public that bird flu was controllable in Thailand, as the opposition called for full disclosure in the kingdom's 14 suspected human cases of the virus. AFP

The new suspected outbreaks were in Ezhou city of Hubei province and Chaoan county of Guangdong province. Suspected or confirmed cases have also hit the most populous city, Shanghai, and Anhui province in east China, the central provinces Hunan and Hubei and Guangxi and Guangdong in the south.

No human cases of bird flu have been reported in the world's most populous nation. In Shanghai, however, 2,000 people have been quarantined and 35,000 ducks culled after 200 of the birds died at a farm outside the city.

Other measures include the establishment of a national "Bird Flu Prevention Headquarters," intensified surveillance of poultry markets and a halt to production at processing plants in the three regions with confirmed cases.

A ban was imposed Saturday on poultry exports from Shanghai, Anhui and Guangdong, which is one of China's top three poultry-producing provinces. Exports from the other regions were halted earlier this week.

Spread by migrating birds

Since the killer H5N1 virus strain emerged in South Korea late last year, Asian nations have quickly fallen prey to the disease which is believed to be spread by wild migrating birds. *(See related stories in Across the Nation, Page A17.)*

More than 33 million chickens, ducks and other poultry have been culled across the region to curb the virus. Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam have all reported outbreaks of H5N1 among poultry, while Taiwan and Pakistan have reported weaker strains.

Call for calm

In Thailand, where some 18.4 million birds have been slaughtered, embattled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra called for calm on Sunday and insisted the outbreak was controllable, as the opposition called for full disclosure over 14 people suspected to have caught the disease including seven who have died.

"We can control it, no problem. Don't panic," Thaksin said.

The epidemic has spread to nearly half of 76 Thai provinces, including the teeming capital Bangkok, after nine new outbreaks in four provinces were reported Saturday.

Quarantine

Countries which have so far been spared from the lethal outbreak have responded by tightening quarantine regulations and banning poultry imports from affected nations.

About 250 healthy chickens and other birds are to be culled in Singapore as a precaution against the disease, although it has not yet reached the island-state, reports said Sunday.

Economic repercussions also loom, with experts warning that the outbreak racing through Asia, home to a staggering seven billion chickens and the source of 27 percent of global poultry production, will disrupt agriculture sectors beyond devastating poultry industries.

Indonesia, which has resisted calls for a cull beyond infected birds, said Sunday it had set aside $5.92 million to compensate farmers who had been ordered to slaughter sick poultry. *Reports from AP and AFP*

2 senators slam JDV on budget deadlock

From page A1

House panel did not show up for a bicameral conference committee meeting.

Congress has until Feb. 5 to act on the budget measure before it goes on recess for the election period.

An enraged Arroyo, who conceded that the proposed 2004 budget would no longer be passed by Congress, said that "as usual the Speaker speaks with a forked tongue."

He wondered how and why De Venecia came up "belatedly" to "this hypocritical discovery of the P60 billion difference?"

"Why did he push the House to pass the Malacañang-proposed 2004 budget? After the Senate adopted it, De Venecia turns around and says with a straight face that the Malacañang-Senate-House 2004 proposal is no good," Arroyo said.

By giving this line, the Speaker had been a "negligent leader" because he was not aware of the P60-billion difference between the 2003 and 2004 budgets, the senator said.

Bigger pork

"And with tongue in cheek, the Speaker says the Senate wants the 2004 budget to protect their pork barrel. What the Speaker did not say is that both the 2003 and 2004 budgets have built in pork barrel both for congressmen and senators. The Speaker prefers (the 2003 budget because it) has a bigger pork barrel for the congressmen," Arroyo said.

At least two sources told the INQUIRER that each congressman was allocated P70 million in pork barrel in 2003. Under the proposed 2004 budget, a congressman's pork barrel would go down to P65 million.

Arroyo said the pork barrel claim made by De Venecia was just a "smokescreen."

Because behind all this, Malacañang and the House both prefer the 2003 budget as this gives them "more flexibility in the realignment of funds," especially in this election year, Arroyo said.

Pangilinan said De Venecia's claim that senators wanted the 2004 budget passed to protect their pork barrel was "squid tactic characteristic of gutter, *trapo* politics."

"The Speaker knows in his heart that his explanation was not correct and not a valid one for the House refusal to sit down with us," he said.

He also said the budget deficit was not determined by the budget itself.

The budget is just an authority to spend, according to Drilon. He said the budget deficit was determined by the funds that the Department of Budget and Management was releasing.

P53-billion cut

In the House, the chair of the committee on appropriations is seeking a P53-billion cut in the proposed 2004 budget to break the deadlock between the House and Senate.

Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., head of the House panel conducting bicameral conference meetings with senators on the budget, urged senators to temporarily set aside political concerns for 2004 and instead concentrate on the passage of the budget bill.

"This is our memo to them: Please take time off from your campaigning and attend to your duties," Andaya said.

A reenactment of the 2003 budget means that the 2004 budget would remain at P804 billion plus a P5.3-billion supplemental budget proposed by the House, according to Andaya.

Senators have threatened to veto the supplemental budget if the House insists on simply reenacting the 2003 budget.

The House said the supplemental budget would ensure that soldiers would get the salary increases the government had promised.

Malacañang remains optimistic that Congress will break the impasse and pass the proposed national budget for 2004 before it adjourns this week.

In an interview with RMN radio, President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the Palace was counting on the "maturity" of the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Bunye said that while the President preferred to have the 2004 budget approved by Congress, she would not mind having to reenact last year's budget if the lawmakers failed to pass the proposed 2004 budget. *With reports from Carlito Pablo and Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

LP still brokering GMA-Roco alliance

From page A1

But even after Roco shot down another proposal to merge forces with Ms Macapagal last week, Malacañang said it was still hopeful it could forge an alliance with him.

In an interview with RMN radio, Ms Macapagal's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said: "Anything is possible in politics." But Bunye did not elaborate.

Unity talks

Drilon said he and Batanes Rep. Florencio Abad, the LP president, were on top of the effort to bring Ms Macapagal and Roco together.

At that time, he said, the LP had not yet formed a formal alliance with the President's Lakas-CMD party, having only announced the party's support for Ms Macapagal early last month.

Drilon said he and Abad had "numerous meetings" with the candidates' authorized representatives.

Their aim, he said, was to find out a way to come up with a "unity ticket" of those politicians who had been allies since Joseph Estrada was deposed in January 2001.

He emphasized that the party employed "very intensive and sincere efforts to bring them together."

"We even tried to get a third party, a respected political leader, but we failed in our mission," Drilon said.

He said he and Abad got "signals" that both camps were firm about their campaign plans before Christmas.

This prompted them to suspend the talks, Drilon said.

But the LP has "not given up" and will continue to exert efforts to unite the two camps, he added.

No impact

But administration and opposition congressmen belittled the impact of a Roco withdrawal.

A group of administration congressmen led by Rep. Wilfrido Villarama (Lakas, Bulacan) said that Ms Macapagal would "win on her own merits and the withdrawal by other candidates is unnecessary."

Villarama used to be allied with Roco, having been elected to Congress as a candidate of Roco's Aksyon Demokratiko.

Referring to the latest Social Weather Stations survey, which showed that Ms Macapagal had overtaken Roco to take second place behind Poe, Villarama said: "The President's ratings will continue to soar, slowly but surely, until she tops the race."

Opposition Rep. Didagen Dilangalen (Puwersa ng Masa, Maguindanao) said that even a withdrawal by Roco would be "immaterial to the expected outcome of the elections."

"FPJ is a sure winner and GMA will not be able to catch up," said Dilangalen, who is running for a Senate seat under the Poe ticket.

Dilangalen dismissed as a political fallacy the view being forwarded by analysts that Roco's votes will be transferred to President Macapagal in the event that Roco takes himself out of the contest.

"FPJ has barely started to campaign and the more he will be out there to get in touch with the masses, the more he will become unbeatable," he said.

Administration Rep. Allan Peter Cayetano (Lakas, Pateros-Taguig) noted that while Roco's withdrawal and support would hasten the President's climb to the top of the surveys, "even if he (Roco) does not withdraw, the people have begun to see the shift of public support to her."

"She (Ms Macapagal) is now starting to benefit from the shift of support from followers of her rivals who have given weight on her experience and platform of government," Cayetano said.

Villarama noted that as the presidential race reached the finish line, candidates other than front runners Poe and Ms Macapagal would be marginalized.

He pointed to what he called the "*llamadista*" culture of Filipinos, meaning the people will support those they perceive as sure winners.

"Voters will gravitate toward the two front-runners," Villarama said. "The voting public will eliminate automatically from their list candidates in the third and fourth slots." *With reports from Carlito Pablo and Gil C. Cabacungan*

CBCP issues gag order on bishops

From page A1

Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, newly elected president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, said the influential group's members had agreed that, henceforth, all stands on national issues would first be discussed in the plenary council.

But as Capalla explained in an earlier interview, individual bishops were allowed to speak outright on matters concerning their own dioceses and positions: "The archbishop of Manila can speak for Manila. I can speak for Davao."

In the same interview, he said this was because the CBCP was "changing its policy."

The Catholic Church in the Philippines, through its intrepid clergy, has actively helped shape the country's political history—straight "from the pulpit," or via sporadic announcements coursed through the media.

(Point of clarification: activist priests like Fr. Robert Reyes are not covered by the directive because one, they're not bishops, and two, the CBCP is concerned only with policy-making. In short, Reyes doesn't have to stop running, or talking.)

Bishop Pedro Arigo, chair of the Episcopal Commission on Prison Pastoral Care, said the bishops agreed on the new system during the latest plenary council held in Tagaytay City last week.

Statements of national import will now have to be cleared with Capalla, or CBCP spokesperson Hernando "Ding" Coronel.

Arigo said leaks to the media often caused inaccurate reports, compelling the CBCP leadership to formulate the policy authorizing only Capalla or Coronel to speak on national issues.

Capalla himself believes that hearing what all CBCP members have to say before making a statement is more "democratic."

The plenary council gathers the CBCP's 120 members twice a year, usually in January and July.

Capalla assumed leadership last Dec. 1, taking over from Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, whose statements during his term were often taken to be the official stand of the entire conference.

This was not right, Capalla said in a commentary written for the group's newsletter, the CBCP Monitor: "The president of the conference is not the head of the Church in (this) country."

MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

MESSAGE

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Iloilo Mission Hospital has been a beacon of service for a hundred years and as such, it truly serves as an instrument in ensuring the health and spiritual well-being of the people.

I congratulate you for acquiring the new CT Scan Machine. May this worthy project continue to allow you to be of good service to the people and help them face the challenges of this world with courage, strength and a blissful heart.

I enjoin the people behind Iloilo Mission Hospital to carry through the invaluable service and be faithful tot he purpose you were created for, that is to be the hands, the feet and the heart of God here on earth.

Mabuhay po kayo at nawa'y pagpalain kayo ng Poong Maykapal!

LOREN LEGARDA
Majority Leader

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

MESSAGE

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I congratulate the IMH for its dedication and hard work in improving the health of our people. As you mark this important event by aiming to provide efficient and innovative methods in the future management and various illnesies, I note with pride the relentless effort of your team in providing your people with access to quality and affordable healthcare services.

We need to strengthen our partnership in making our countrymen live a healthy and productive life. I exhort you to persevere in your efforts towards world class medical competencies and services in order to achieve a more peaceful and progressive society.

Let us work towards achieving a healthy and strong republic. Congratulations to all.

Mabuhay kayong lahat.

MANUEL M DAYRIT, MD., MSc.
Secretary of Health

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ILOILO
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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Your more than 100 years in the service simply showed your commitment to serve the people of Iloilo. As such, you remain to be at the forefront of caring and believe in the importance of developing a team of loyal and efficient employees' and medical personnel whose sincere concern is the smooth and successful operation of the hospital in providing the best medical care to its patients and well-equipped facilities.

Again, my sincerest congratulations and I wish Iloilo Mission Hospital more power in the years ahead.

NIEL D. TUPAS, SR.
Governor

Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF ILOILO
OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

MESSAGE

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Your acquisition of a Computed Tomography Scan Machine has further boosted the Iloilo Mission Hospital's quest to provide the best medical care to our people. The CT Scan definitely offers distinct advantages over other techniques in diagnosing and detecting disease, and its acquisition clearly underscores the hospital's determination to advance the cause of the Lord Jesus Christ through physical and spiritual healing.

Ilonggos can certainly look forward to better health with your dedication, unselfish service and modern health equipment-ingredients sorely needed to fight the host of new and old afflictions that continue to stalk our city and threaten their well-being.

Godspeed and best wishes!

Jerry P. Treñas
City Mayor

ILOILO MISSION HOSPITAL
ILOILO CITY, PHILIPPINES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

My warmest greetings to the Iloilo Mission Hospital (IMH) family for helping achieve another important milestone in the Hospital's history.

Today, we reflect on the tremendous progress that has been made at IMH during the past 102 years of its existence. We remember with deep gratitude the signal contribution, sacrifice, and devotion of those who have gone before us.

What makes IMH unique is that it resulted from the pioneering efforts of the American Baptist missionaries and the Filipino Baptists. Their hopes, their faith journey, their dreams, their commitment to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, led to the founding of a caring and sharing hospital.

The acquisition of a CT Scan machine will add utility to the current services rendered by IMH to its constituents not only in Iloilo but in the entire Western Visayas. It will also improve its role as an affiliate hospital for the College of Nursing and College of Medicine of Central Philippine University (CPU) in developing the potentialities of men and women who are dedicating their lives to the health care ministry.

We thank the Lord for all His blessings. May our quest for excellence and service to our nation will always be for the honor and glory of our Almighty Father.

JUANITO M. ACANTO, LLB. Ph.D.
Chairman

ILOILO MISSION HOSPITAL
P.O. Box 340, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. 320-03-15 to 19 Fax No. (63-33) 320-03-21

MESSAGE

As we launch today another milestone by inaugurating this MX 8000 Dual Slice, Sub Second CT Scan, the Iloilo Mission Hospital (IMH) commends the support and active involvement of the IMH Board of Directors, Corporation Members, Management and Staff and all the stakeholders in our quest for excellence in the healthcare industry.

Throughout its 102 years of existence, IMH has been an integral part of the history and healthcare service of the country. It is our goal to always maintain the relevance of our institution in the healing, teaching and preaching ministry in the midst of this globally competitive environment and the advancing times.

We cannot help but recognize the hands of God working in this part of the globe. Through our unselfish dedication, loyalty and generous service to our institution and our people, we can definitely look to the future with pride and bigger plans for IMH. Now and for always, we shall remain committed in providing the best healthcare possible anchored on strong and fundamental Christian values. Truly indeed, Iloilo Mission Hospital is at the Forefront of Caring: A Hundred Years and Beyond!

God Bless and Congratulations!

ELMER Q. PEDREGOSA, MD, MPH, MHA, FPCHA
Hospital Director

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HOSPITAL LOBBY

The Iloilo Mission Hospital traces its beginning in the year 1901. The struggles that this hospital have undergone could not be undermined by anybody. Raging from the waves of oppresive time, Iloilo Mission Hospital stood still and continued to offer its services to the people. Its Centennial theme, "Iloilo Mission Hospital at the Forefront of Caring: A Hundred Years and Beyond!" perfectly describes its direction towards the future.

Reviewing its dramatic history, a reflection on a bamboo structure along Calle Concepcion also known as Calle Amparo (now Ledesma Street), built as an 8-bed nipa house in 1901 called the Mission Hospital Dispensary, brings us to the beginnings of a small hospital initiated by a Presbyterian missionary and physician, Dr. Joseph Andrew Hall. It was the **First Protestant Hospital in the Philippines.** Transferring to a purchased lot along Calle Iznart five years later, a 30-bed facility was established along with the **First Training School for Nurses in the Philippines.**

In pursuit of its vision as a "beacon of healing, of evangelization and of modern ways," Dr. Hall and Dr. Raphael C. Thomas of the Baptists, worked under a common fund and combined efforts within the walls of what was eventually called the Sabine Haines Memorial Union Mission Hospital, more popularly called then as the Union Mission Hospital. In 1925, the entire medical work was eventually turned over to the Baptist Mission when Dr. Hall agreed to be transferred to another assignment. The hospital was then renamed Iloilo Mission Hospital.

Work in healing the body and enriching the soul both continued since then, even as the hospital complex moved from one location to another, setting permanency in its present location in the early 30's where progress took its twists and turns with a lot of help from its donors, benefactors, and local hospital funds.

This olden hospital has also undergone improvements and renovations within the decade which included the 40 aircon rooms of Annex 1 and 2 in June 1991; New Chapel in August 1993; the Business Office and OB-gyne/Nursery Departments in August 1994 and ICU in January 1995; 21 aircon rooms in Annex 3 Building and the New Laboratory and Pulmonary Unit in June 1997; Dietary Unit in September 1998; Emergency Room in January and the hospital lobby in December 1999; and the Pediatric Intermediate and Intensive Care Unit in May 2000. The decade saw other renovations and completions at the Dialysis Unit, Pharmacy, X-ray Department, Heart Station. These efforts were geared toward the IMH Vision of delivering quality patient care, through improved and well-equipped hospital facilities and capable, committed and caring hospital staff, and advancing the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

IMH is considered to be the seat of training for various health professionals – doctors, nurses, medical technologists, physical and occupational therapists, x-ray technicians, and pharmacists, among others. As the first nursing school in the Philippines, IMH is homed to thousands of nurses whose values and competencies have been molded according to the virtues of Christianity. Thus, it is the basis why IMH is known as haven of caring people.

Today, as IMH bridges the historical gap, changes have been planned to cater to the important needs of its clients. The new Centennial Building is a manifestation, that, indeed, Iloilo Mission Hospital dreams of giving the people a service worth remembering. From previously rustic style dominated by old figures, IMH created a temporary yet tropical that breathes quiet spaces and resplendent with natural scent of trees and other ornamental plants in its backyards.

Additional 63 rooms will be established in the new building. These are private rooms categorized to deluxe, junior suites and executive suites. The business office will also be transferred in the new building, assuring more corporate and full computerization of all business transactions. Air-conditioned transaction area will soon be provided.

This Centennial Building is designed as a hotel with exotic ambience perfectly suited to the demands of its clients. Its extrinsic skywalk connects the Centennial Building to the main building. Rich with glass panels, Centennial Building offers absolute refreshing areas in its Coffee tables near its verandah.

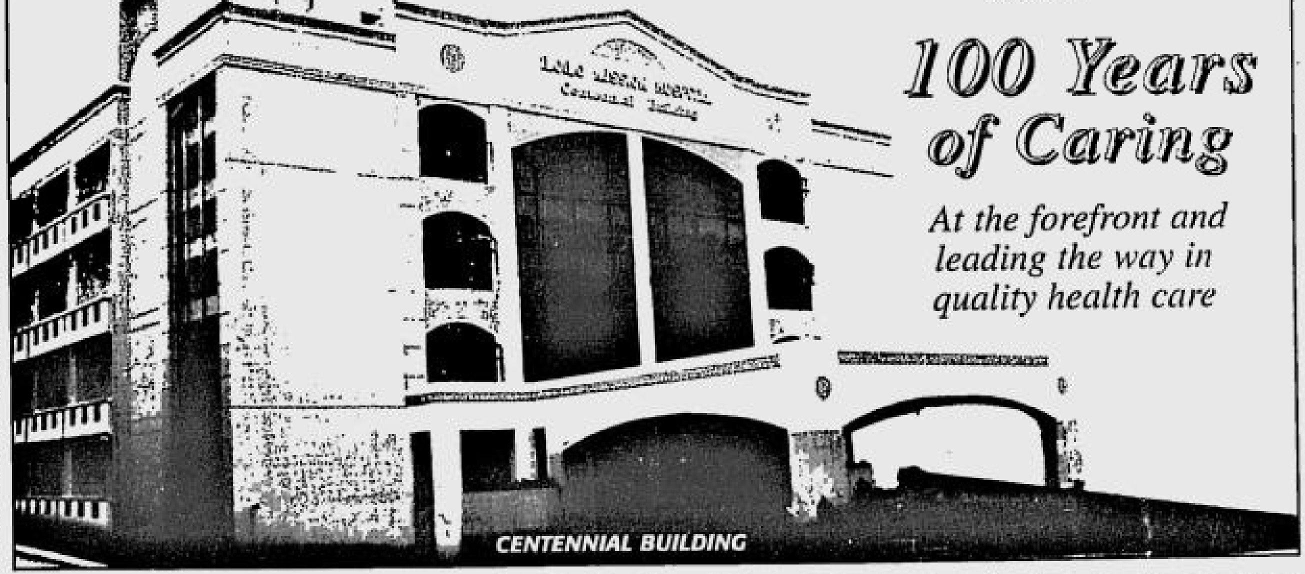
The interior designs of its room are conducive for deep relaxation and perfect for rest as patients listen to the swaying sounds of the trees mingled in the sweet chime of the birds outside. Aside from its luxuriant appearance, the IMH preserves the trees as it gives therapeutic value to their patients.

Dr. Elmer Q. Pedregosa, Hospital Director of Iloilo Mission Hospital, only envisions to provide comfort to their patients through a decent and "homey" atmosphere. Ever since, IMH has already developed the kind of caring that a particular patient expects from a hospital. This "homey" atmosphere, perhaps, is one factor why IMH earned many loyal clients. Its committed and efficient personnels added to the warm-hearted characteristics of this hospital.

As this hospital moves on, Dr. Pedregosa established networking with the hospital's donors which actually keeps them back again. As a result, hospital donors continuously give their supports. Needless to say, IMH is no longer run by foreign missionaries. It now envisions to become self-reliant.

Looking back to its history, IMH would only desire to continue the service heritage that once started by Presbyterian missionary.

Truly, Iloilo Mission Hospital has been at the forefront of caring for the last one hundred years. And it commits itself to more years to come!



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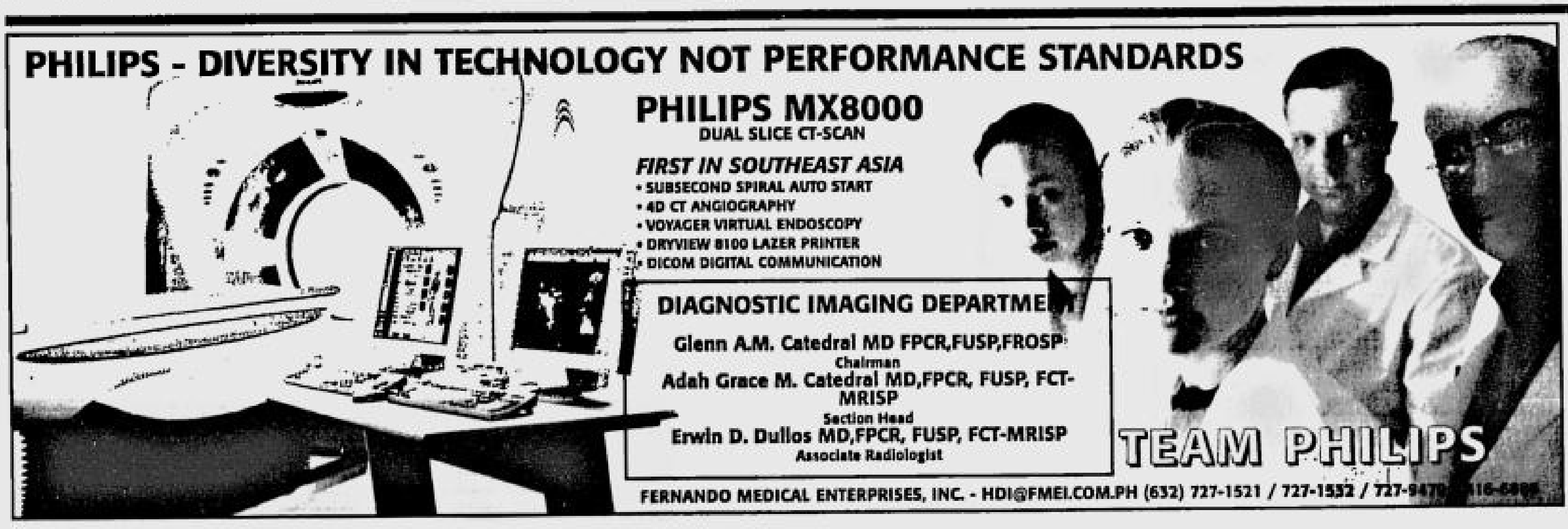

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DR. ELMER Q. PEDREGOSA MPH,MHA,FPCHA
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MR. GERONIMO ORTEGA
Treasurer/Business Manager

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MESSAGES

Republic of the Philippines
SENATE
Pasay City

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ILOILO CITY, PHILIPPINES
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ELMER Q. PEDREGOSA, MD, MPH, MHA, FPCHA
Hospital Director

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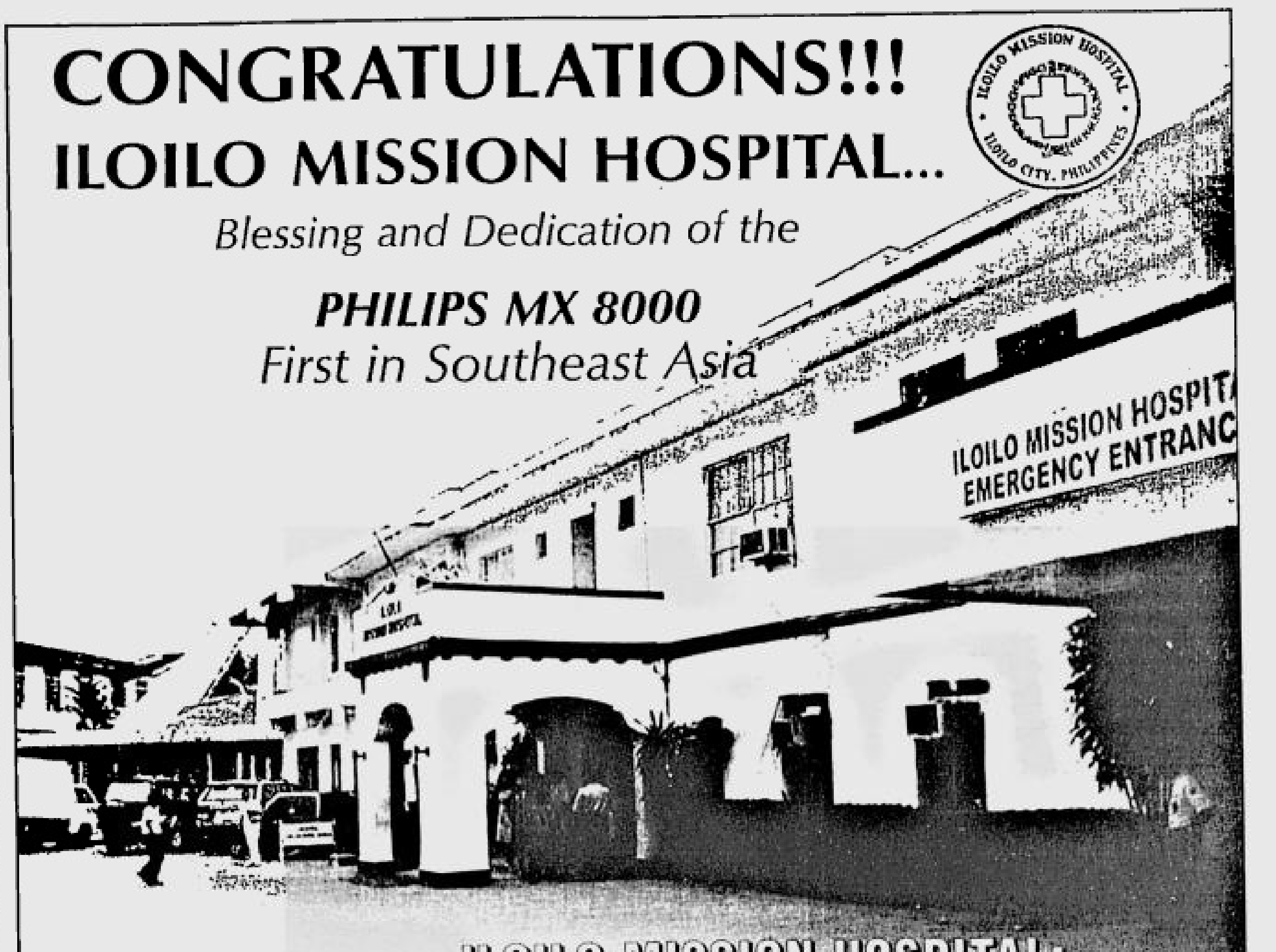

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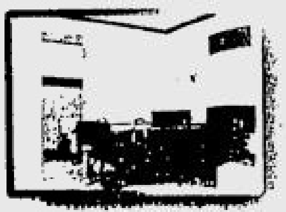

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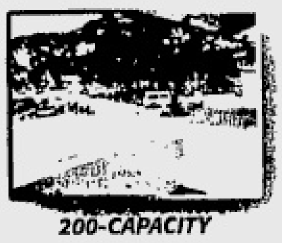
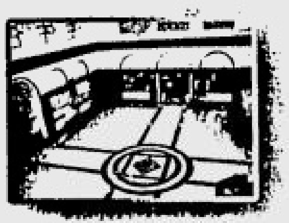
SPACIOUS ROOM W/ EXOTIC AMBIENCE



200-CAPACITY CAR PARK

HOSPITAL CAFÉ



HOSPITAL LOBBY

The Iloilo Mission Hospital traces its beginning in the year 1901. The struggles that this hospital have undergone could not be undermined by anybody. Raging from the waves of oppresive time, Iloilo Mission Hospital stood still and continued to offer its services to the people. Its Centennial theme, "Iloilo Mission Hospital at the Forefront of Caring: A Hundred Years and Beyond!" perfectly describes its direction towards the future.

Reviewing its dramatic history, a reflection on a bamboo structure along Calle Concepcion also known as Calle Amparo (now Ledesma Street), built as an 8-bed nipa house in 1901 called the Mission Hospital Dispensary, brings us to the beginnings of a small hospital initiated by a Presbyterian missionary and physician, Dr. Joseph Andrew Hall. It was the **First Protestant Hospital in the Philippines**. Transferring to a purchased lot along Calle Iznart five years later, a 30-bed facility was established along with the **First Training School for Nurses in the Philippines**.

In pursuit of its vision as a "beacon of healing, of evangelization and of modern ways," Dr. Hall and Dr. Raphael C. Thomas of the Baptists, worked under a common fund and combined efforts within the walls of what was eventually called the Sabine Haines Memorial Union Mission Hospital, more popularly called then as the Union Mission Hospital. In 1925, the entire medical work was eventually turned over to the Baptist Mission when Dr. Hall agreed to be transferred to another assignment. The hospital was then renamed Iloilo Mission Hospital.

Work in healing the body and enriching the soul both continued since then, even as the hospital complex moved from one location to another, setting permanency in its present location in the early 30's where progress took its twists and turns with a lot of help from its donors, benefactors, and local hospital funds.

This olden hospital has also undergone improvements and renovations within the decade which included the 40 aircon rooms of Annex 1 and 2 in June 1991; New Chapel in August 1993; the Business Office and OB-gyne/Nursery Departments in August 1994 and ICU in January 1995; 21 aircon rooms in Annex 3 Building and the New Laboratory and Pulmonary Unit in June 1997; Dietary Unit in September 1998; Emergency Room in January and the hospital lobby in December 1999; and the Pediatric Intermediate and Intensive Care Unit in May 2000. The decade saw other renovations and completions at the Dialysis Unit, Pharmacy, X-ray Department, Heart Station. These efforts were geared toward the IMH Vision of delivering quality patient care, through improved and well-equipped hospital facilities and capable, committed and caring hospital staff, and advancing the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

IMH is considered to be the seat of training for various health professionals – doctors, nurses, medical technologists, physical and occupational therapists, x-ray technicians, and pharmacists, among others. As the first nursing school in the Philippines, IMH is homed to thousands of nurses whose values and competencies have been molded according to the virtues of Christianity. Thus, it is the basis why IMH is known as haven of caring people.

Today, as IMH bridges the historical gap, changes have been planned to cater to the important needs of its clients. The new Centennial Building is a manifestation, that, indeed, Iloilo Mission Hospital dreams of giving the people a service worth remembering. From previously rustic style dominated by old figures, IMH created a temporary yet tropical that breathes quiet spaces and resplendent with natural scent of trees and other ornamental plants in its backyards.

Additional 63 rooms will be established in the new building. These are private rooms categorized to deluxe, junior suites and executive suites. The business office will also be transferred in the new building, assuring more corporate and full computerization of all business transactions. Air-conditioned transaction area will soon be provided.

This Centennial Building is designed as a hotel with exotic ambience perfectly suited to the demands of its clients. Its extrinsic skywalk connects the Centennial Building to the main building. Rich with glass panels, Centennial Building offers absolute refreshing areas in its Coffee tables near its verandah.

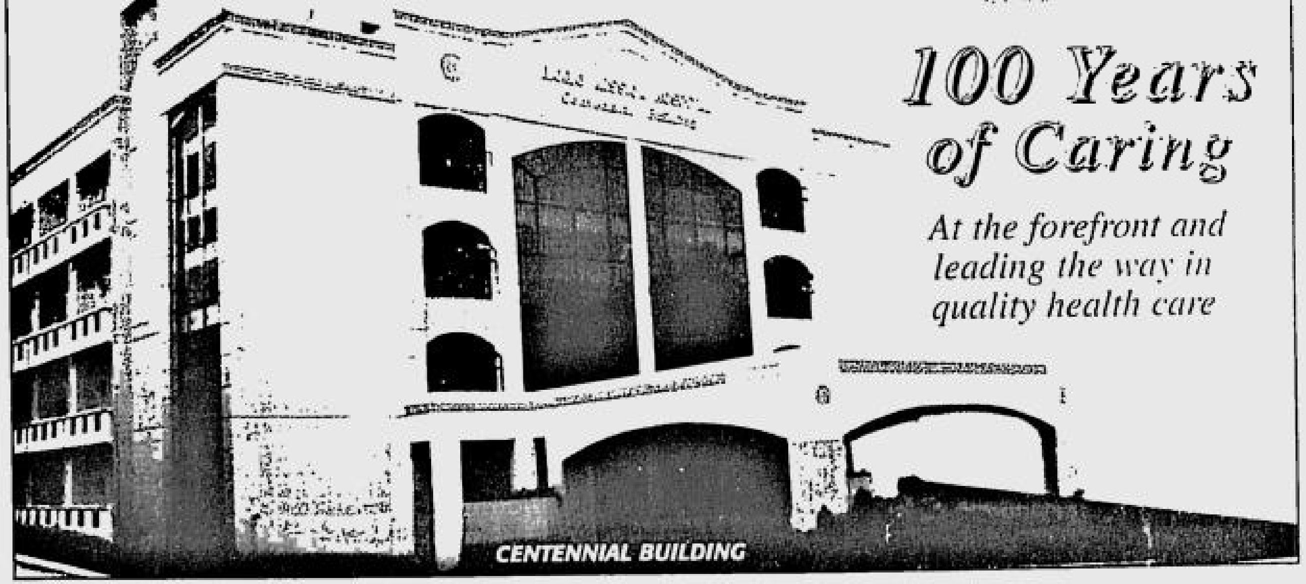
The interior designs of its room are conducive for deep relaxation and perfect for rest as patients listen to the swaying sounds of the trees mingled in the sweet chime of the birds outside. Aside from its luxuriant appearance, the IMH preserves the trees as it gives therapeutic value to their patients.

Dr. Elmer Q. Pedregosa, Hospital Director of Iloilo Mission Hospital, only envisions to provide comfort to their patients through a decent and "homey" atmosphere. Ever since, IMH has already developed the kind of caring that a particular patient expects from a hospital. This "homey" atmosphere, perhaps, is one factor why IMH earned many loyal clients. Its committed and efficient personnels added to the warm-hearted characteristics of this hospital.

As this hospital moves on, Dr. Pedregosa established networking with the hospital's donors which actually keeps them back again. As a result, hospital donors continuously give their supports. Needless to say, IMH is no longer run by foreign missionaries. It now envisions to become self-reliant.

Looking back to its history, IMH would only desire to continue the service heritage that once started by Presbyterian missionary.

Truly, Iloilo Mission Hospital has been at the forefront of caring for the last one hundred years And it commits itself to more years to come!



CENTENNIAL BUILDING

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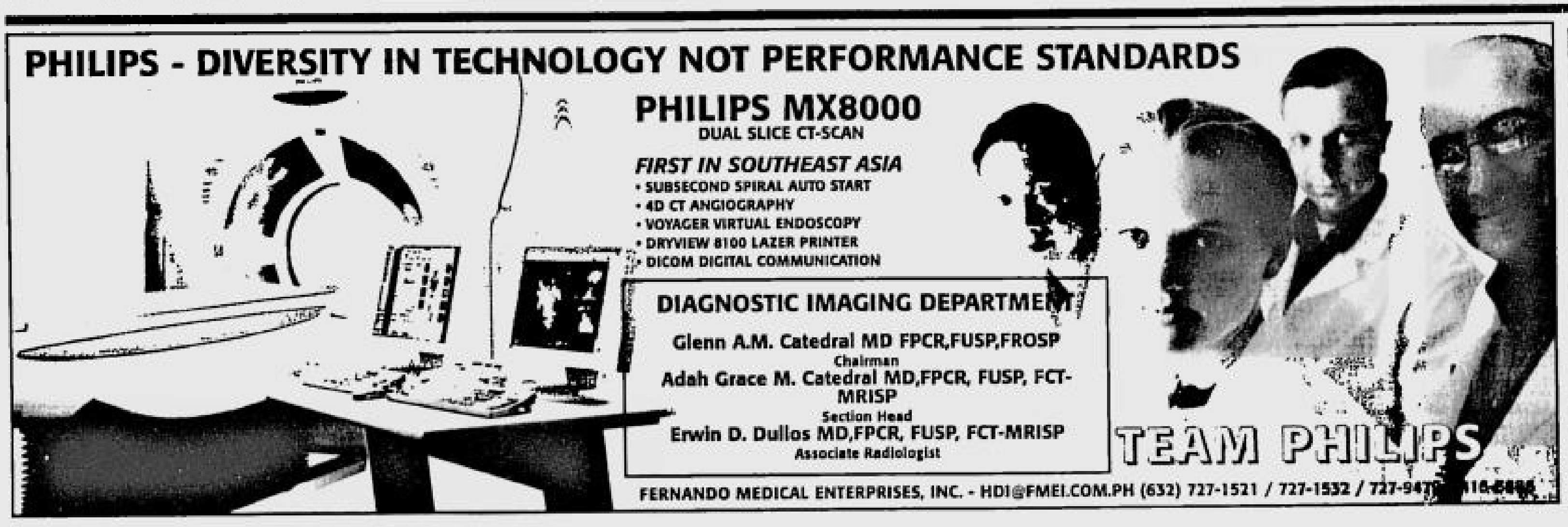

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Roco belittles latest SWS poll findings

From page A1

Friday results of its nationwide survey, showing actor Fernando Poe Jr. leading the pack with 36 percent of the 1,200 voters polled saying they would vote for him. Mangahas and Poe are first cousins.

Poe was trailed by President Macapagal-Arroyo (27 percent), Roco (19 percent), opposition Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson (11 percent), preacher Eddie Villanueva (one percent) and Eddie Gil (0.1 percent).

Unfazed by the survey results, Roco and his senatorial candidates Perfecto Yasay Jr., blind lawyer Nicanor Gatmaitan and bowling champ Bong Coo joined the *balut* festival in Pateros on Saturday night and gamely gobbled up *balut* before a crowd outside the San Roque church.

Balut is an unhatched duck egg that comes mainly from Pateros, a municipality in the southern part of Metro Manila. Elsewhere, it is considered an exotic food.

Afraid

Asked if the survey results dashed his hopes, Roco said: "We think all those are trying to convince me to favor Macapagal. If they're so convinced that they're ahead, why are they trying to convince me? That means, they are afraid."

Roco also thumbed down a proposal by political analysts that he drop his bid so Ms Macapagal could focus on beating Poe.

"I don't know what negotiations they're talking about, but we'll bring the fight all the way to the hills. We'll bring it to the schools; we'll bring it to Pateros and everywhere. There is need for change, and 73 percent want change and then we will give them the opportunity," he said.

"You want this government? I think nobody wants this government anymore. So they see it as Roco or Fernando Poe. That's the choice of the people," he added.

Solita Monsod, former socioeconomic planning secretary, and Tony Gatmaitan, president of the think-tank Political Economic Applied Research Foundation, said Ms Macapagal had better chances of beating Poe if she could coax Roco into dropping his candidacy.

The President said she was confident her accomplishments would ensure her victory, but added that she was open to negotiations with Roco.

Nicanor Gatmaitan said he was not bothered at all by the survey results, saying: "With that kind of survey, the more that my morale has been boosted together with the party. It goes to show that in the first place, we should not base our conclusions on this survey."

"The morale is very high. In fact, I just came from the provinces. In Aklan, everybody is rooting for Raul Roco for president; not only the youth, but the ordinary people. They're not affected by what people are saying in Metro Manila," added Yasay, former chair of the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Echoing Roco, Coo said it was too premature to make conclusions based on the survey results. "We've only just begun; we still have 90 days," she said.

Experience

In the same SWS survey, Ms Macapagal was No. 1 when respondents were asked who among the presidential candidates had the most experience in uplifting the Philippine economy.

But the President, who has flaunted her economic background and three-year experience as the country's CEO as her strongest suit, was surprisingly not the overwhelming choice of the respondents.

Ms Macapagal was chosen by 33 percent of the respondents, Roco by 23 percent, Poe by 22 percent, and Sen. Panfilo Lacson by 15 percent.

Villanueva was fifth with a 1.1 percent and Eddie Gil had 0.1 percent. A total of 5.5 percent of the respondents had no answer or were undecided.

The survey, commissioned by the AMA group of companies whose founder Amable R. Aguiluz V is a special envoy to the Gulf Cooperation Council, said the "identification of a presidential candidate with the most experience to uplift the Philippine economy is strongly related to intended votes for that particular candidate." SWS did not elaborate.

FPJ camp not too happy with poll results

THE CAMP of opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. is not too happy with the actor's lead of nine-percentage points over President Macapagal-Arroyo in the survey of the Social Weather Stations, saying that this could be easily erased should the administration engage in *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving).

Miguel Romero, spokesperson of the Kilusang Nagkakaisang Pilipino (KNP), expressed alarm over the results of the survey showing Ms Macapagal narrowing Poe's lead partly as a result of backers of Sen. Noli de Castro allegedly throwing their support behind the President.

An insidious plot to tamper with survey results to favor Ms Macapagal and De Castro may already be in operation precisely to set the stage for possible massive cheating in the May elections, Romero said.

GMA rebound indicates FPJ vulnerability

From page A1

In the November 2003 survey, the gap between Poe and Roco was a hair's breadth. They were running almost neck-and-neck. The new survey emphasizes the unpredictability of the presidential race. The front-runners in the few past surveys cannot be confident of staying in front and the underrated Ms Macapagal is not incapable of pulling a surprise.

Unless Poe generates a fresh momentum, it would be unrealistic to expect an avalanche. Ms Macapagal can spring a shocking upset, sending the poll surveys awry.

It is foolish to ignore the warning of Felipe Miranda, director of Pulse Asia, SWS main rival in the polling business, that Poe's election is inevitable. Miranda dismissed this prediction as "speculative."

Statistics are not on the side of Poe. Miranda points out that "to become a (runaway) winner, the presidential candidate should be gaining at least 40 percent now." Since last November, no one among Ms Macapagal, Roco, Poe and Sen. Panfilo Lacson has been seen as a "runaway" winner.

Miranda recalls that as early as December 1977, Joseph Estrada had gained 40 percent from which he built up momentum as the election in May 1998 drew closer.

Position eroded

After November last year, the emergence of issues that provoked debate appeared to have eroded Poe's position. His repeated ducking of public appearance, in which his views on national issues were eagerly sought, and his laconic public statements, which did not shed light on his policies and programs and how he is going to run the economy and the country, seem to have taken a toll on his popularity.

In the few times that he honored invitations to appear at forums organized by civic or business organizations, Poe has refused to reveal what goes on inside his mind.

Poe cannot permanently evade demands for a public scrutiny of his ideas on how to run the country which faces complex problems. The country has sunk into Southeast Asia's economic basket case and has seen its democracy unsettled by a wave of political turbulence that has unseated two administrations through mob action (euphemistically called people power) in two decades.

As the election nears, presidential candidates come under increasing pressure from business groups and the press to detail their policies and programs. The press, in particular, is getting impatient over Poe's evasion to engage in an exchange of ideas.

Important test

Scrutiny by the press is the first important test that a presidential candidate has to undergo.

So far, Poe has ducked this obstacle course, much to the loss of the Filipino public which is anxious over where he is going to lead the country—whether he will drag it into a cliff into a leap into the unknown—no one has a clear idea. He has spent only a few minutes in all with the press, and in one of his rare appearances, he did nothing more than spew gibberish, which is not the same as policy or programs.

Scrutiny by the press is the equivalent of surprise quiz sprung on grade school students to find out whether they have done their homework. Presidential candidates should not underestimate the importance of the regular quiz by the press as a function of democracy and information.

These quizzes are going to be regular and even more difficult in the course of the election campaign, and their severity will test the patience of even a sitting president.

Early on, Poe has already flunked this competence test by the press. Last week at the birthday party of Sen. Loren Legarda, reporters pounced on Poe with pointed questions regarding his political and economic platform, and the tumbling of the peso.

The reporters failed to extract any intelligible answers, and were brusquely cut out. Poe was annoyed by some of the questions, including how would stabilize the peso.

GMA-Roco alliance

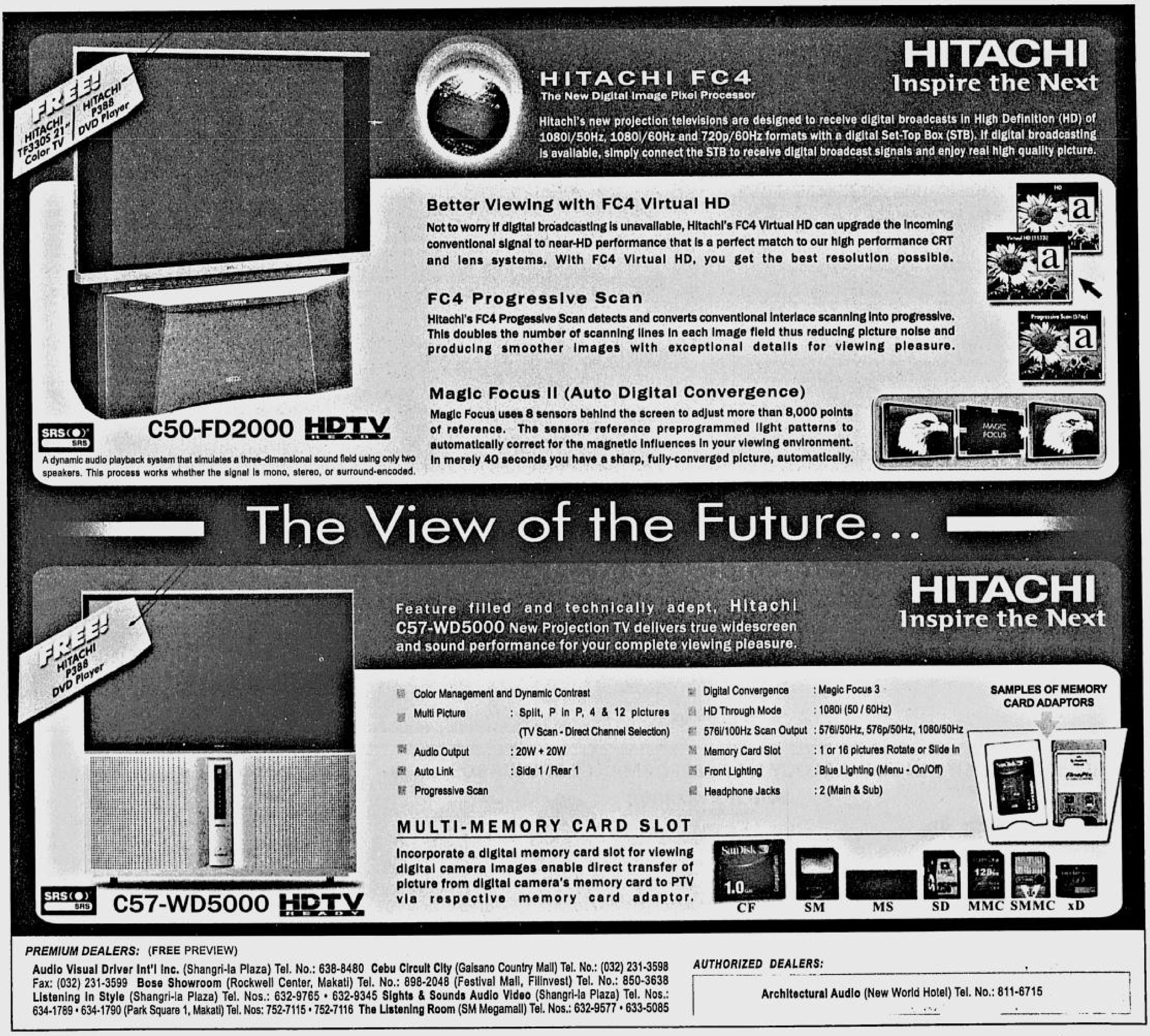
The latest survey opens the possibility of a new realignment, more likely in a Macapagal-Roco alliance, which has been given more incentive by the finding that the President is catching up in the surveys and has caught up with Roco.

The question that faces this alliance is who will step down—the President or Roco. Within weeks, it might be clear who of the two has a better chance to win. It all depends if Poe gains momentum or shows exhaustion.

The latest survey indicates Ms Macapagal is not a pushover. In the past, her poll ratings have been resilient. As the incumbent, she holds the key to shaping the agenda of public issues.

It is in this realm where Poe is showing vulnerability. He dislikes ideas. He seeks refuge behind obfuscation. The survey shows Poe is hurting from encounters with the press over issues about policy and programs. The more Poe meets the press, the more his bankruptcy in ideas will be exposed and be glaring.

This will be reflected in the next few surveys.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Shootout at arboretum

Cops, security guards exchange shots: 1 dead

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

TENSION gripped the University of the Philippines Arboretum in Quezon City after an alleged shootout ensued the other night between security guards and policemen.

A report by the Central Police District Investigation Unit (CIU) said one of the security guards, whom they identified as Benigno Siocion, was killed during the shootout.

Nineteen other security guards were arrested, the report added.

CIU deputy chief Jose Garcia told the INQUIRER yesterday that the shootout ensued when policemen went to the UP Arboretum and arrested three allegedly drunken security guards.

The report said a resident in the area had called Patrol 117 around 6 p.m. on Saturday and reported that security guards there had been firing their guns after a drinking spree.

When the first police team came and arrested the three guards, the other guards circled the policemen and demanded that their colleagues be released.

Some of the guards had started firing shots, the report said, prompting the police team to call for reinforcements.

When other police teams responded, the more than 20 guards in the area shot it out with them, resulting in the death of Siocion, the report said.

The cops also chased the guards and arrested 19 of them.

But at the CIU detention cell, the guards, all from the 168 Security Agency, denied they were drunk and claimed that it was the cops who first fired at them.

About 40 security guards are deployed in eight guard posts in the UP Arboretum. The tight security was meant to prevent violence, which for several times had erupted in the compound due to an ownership row.

FAKE MEDICINES
Agents of the National Bureau of Investigation inspect the fake medicines they seized during a raid last week of a drugs firm on Lacson Avenue and Aragon Street in Sta. Cruz, Manila. The raid was conducted on the strength of two search warrants issued by Judge Antonio Eugenio Jr. of Manila RTC branch 24.

METROBRIEFS

Call centers raided

THE POLICE raided yesterday four telephone long distance centers in Metro Manila, Laguna and Rizal that were allegedly illegally tapping the services of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company. The telephone centers, the names of which had not been release as of press time, used powerful radio systems to connect to PLDT's phone lines, tapping the phone giant's "ship to shore" services, the police said. The centers—located in Antipolo City, Paranaque, Taguig and San Pedro, Laguna—had been offering services much cheaper than rates approved by the National Telecommunications Commission, according to Chief Supt. Oscar Valenzuela, Eastern Police District head. The police confiscated computers, high frequency radios, radio trans-receivers and interface boxes from the raided centers. PLDT is losing around P10 million every month to these call centers, the police said. *Luige del Puerto*

10 cops charged

A NIGHTCLUB owner and two of her employees have filed robbery and grave coercion charges against 10 members of the Western Police District Intelligence and Investigation Division (WPD DIID). The charges sprang from a raid conducted by the police Friday night at the Sugarcane Restaurant on 1118 Mabini Street, Malate, Manila. Owner Maria Charlie Maquiling, 49, and waitresses Marianne Suberi, 29, and Marjorie Garcillan, 24, accused the policemen of taking P31,000 cash and a necklace worth P8,300, which were found missing after the policemen swept through her 2nd floor bedroom. On the other hand, the lawmen accused the restaurant owner of allowing her club to be a front for prostitution. DIID chief Supt. Edgar Danao said the complaint of the three women were only meant as a "leverage" against the prostitution charges filed against them. *Tarra Quismundo*

Intensified drugs drive vowed

By Tarra Quismundo

ENCOURAGED by a warm response from Manila residents, the Western Police District has vowed to intensify its anti-drug operations.

The targets: Other crowded areas in the city.

In an interview the other day, WPD Director Pedro Bulaong said they had received praises and commendations from barangay officials and residents along the railroad tracks in the city after they conducted a saturation drive there last week.

The early morning clearing operation on Jan. 29 brought some 1,500 men to police custody, most of whom were arrested after they were caught in the act of using drugs.

Bulaong said the operations covered areas along the railroad tracks in Tondo, Sta. Cruz, Sampaloc, Sta. Mesa, Pandacan and Sta. Ana.

He said barangay officials and residents had expressed satisfaction and relief because the police operations had cleared their areas of drug users.

Such a response calls for more of the same operations, Bulaong said, adding that other slum areas in Manila are next in line for the anti-drug operations.

As for fears of possible human rights violations, Bulaong said that the operations were undertaken based on reports of residents and the Barangay Anti-Drug Abuse Council (Badac) in a specific community.

Cops assure Manila folk of orderly, peaceful polls

By Tarra Quismundo

THE WESTERN Police District is ready to secure the city, the candidates and the voters during the May 10 elections, according to WPD Director Pedro Bulaong.

"We have already coordinated with the six district election officers and the regional election officer, so that we could anticipate the kind of security that we need to implement. Now we are ready," Bulaong said in an interview.

Bulaong said the WPD's 3,550 men will be deployed in public elementary and high schools all over the city, which will serve as polling precincts.

"We will be maintaining peace and order, and if there are reports of disturbance on election day, massive vote buying, or people wielding guns, then we will respond," said Bulaong.

Aside from polling precincts, the voters and the candidates themselves will be secured by the police, said Bulaong.

He, however, clarified that police security for the candidates will only be limited to securing them while conducting political rallies or campaigning around the city.

Bulaong explained that WPD officers will not be allowed to work as personal security for politicians or candidates.

2 Metro fires greet February

FIRES hit a plastics warehouse in Valenzuela City and a public market in Quezon City in the first hours of February.

About 12:50 a.m. yesterday, fire broke out in a public market on Mindanao Avenue and Tandang Sora, Quezon City, gutting several stalls.

About an hour later, another fire broke out in the warehouse of RS Unique Plastic Products in Barangay Ugong, Valenzuela.

The fire began in the warehouse's production area, fire probers said. *Edson Tandoc Jr.*

Oops, don't deface this poster

By Edson Castro Tandoc Jr.

SPARE these posters.

The police are warning residents that removing or writing on the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force (Naktf) posters placed all over the metropolis could send them to jail.

This came after police noted that some of the posters were torn down a few days after they were posted.

In some cases, the posters were left pasted on the walls and posts but some residents made fun out of the pictures by writing on them—just like what kids usually do with political posters.

About 50,000 Naktf posters have been posted in strategic locations in Metro Manila. The posters carry the pictures of 17 wanted kidnapping suspects with their names, ages, addresses and the reward for their capture.

Northern Police District Director Marcelino Franco has told the INQUIRER that any person caught writing or drawing caricatures on the Naktf posters would be arrested for vandalism.

The posters are supposed to aid the police in hunting down the suspects by showing the pictures to residents who could then report to the police in case they see any of the wanted suspects in their neighborhood. Removing or drawing things on the posters would render the posters useless.

In the Northern Police District, policemen have begun posting the posters on Jan. 23. In Caloocan City, 280 posters were given, 90 posters in Malabon City, 60 posters in Navotas and 100 in Valenzuela City.

In the letter of instruction given to the district office, the posters are to be put in places frequented by people like terminals, sea ports, markets, churches, waiting sheds, city, municipal and barangay halls, schools and even malls.

The posters should be placed at eye-level or five to six feet from the ground.

NPD Operations chief Genesis Tolejano said the posters showing the suspects' pictures would help in their capture.

The rewards range from P1 million to P300,000.

AN ED FOR KIDNAP
NAKTF HOTLINE (02)727

A NAKTF poster on Ongpin Street ERIK ARAZAS

PUVs told: Fix your signboards

COMMUTERS and pedestrians need not worry about confusing route signs on public utility vehicles anymore.

The Metropolitan Manila Development Authority has required buses and jeepneys to install permanent signboards on the windshields and bodies of their vehicles to eliminate trip-cutting and out of line operations.

Through a regulation approved by the Metro Manila Council, the agency prohibits the use of more than one windshield signboard and the use of detachable and hand-held route signs.

Erring owners and operators will pay a P500 fine, MMDA officials said.

According to the MMDA, the signboard should be permanently posted or painted below the windshield, below the window at the back of the vehicle, and at the right and left sides of the bus or jeepney. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

NBP tries to 'snatch' Abadilla slay convict

By Tina Santos

THE TYPICALLY quiet weekend at the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI) was shaken on Saturday when officers of the New Bilibid Prisons abruptly tried to take a prisoner who was legally confined at the hospital.

It was about 11 a.m. when about five NBP officers led by Arturo Justo and Joycelyn Ramos arrived and tried to take Lenido Lumanog back to the national penitentiary.

Abadilla slay

Lumanog, 47, who was convicted of murdering former Col. Rolando Abadilla, is confined at the NKTI while recuperating from a kidney transplant.

The members of the NBP "recovery team," which is usually sent to recapture escaped convicts, claimed that they had orders from the Supreme Court to bring Lumanog back to prison.

They, however, could not present any papers to support their claim, Lumanog said.

He added that the actions of the NBP men were suspicious because it was a Saturday and no court would issue such an order on a weekend.

"They were very insistent, they kept on telling me that I had to go with them," Lumanog said in Filipino.

Tesoro order

The team showed Lumanog a copy of an order from prison director Venancio Tesoro dated Jan. 31, saying that he should be fetched and taken back to the NBP.

Tesoro's order was based on the certification of NKTI director Dr. Enrique Ona that Lumanog was already fit for discharge.

But Lumanog's lawyer, Soliman Santos, explained that (Lumanog) could not be returned to the NBP without an order from the High Court, which allowed his transfer from the NBP to the NKTI.

REYES

LUMANOG

TESORO

"Until there is such an order, we request that the status quo of his confinement at the NKTI be maintained," said Santos.

Santos, along with running priest Fr. Robert Reyes, who stands as Lumanog's spiritual adviser, were among the first to rush to the hospital upon learning of the incident. Lumanog's family was in Pampanga to attend to his ailing mother-in-law at the time.

A commotion nearly occurred when hospital security guards prevented Reyes from entering the building.

"Father, we were told not to allow you inside. You better wait here," Reyes quoted one of the security guards as saying.

Later in the day, the team managed to produce a discharge slip for Lumanog signed by a certain Dr. Baloloy. However, it did not bear the signature of Lumanog's attending physician, Dr. Caesar Casanova.

The NBP team left the NKTI at past 10 p.m.

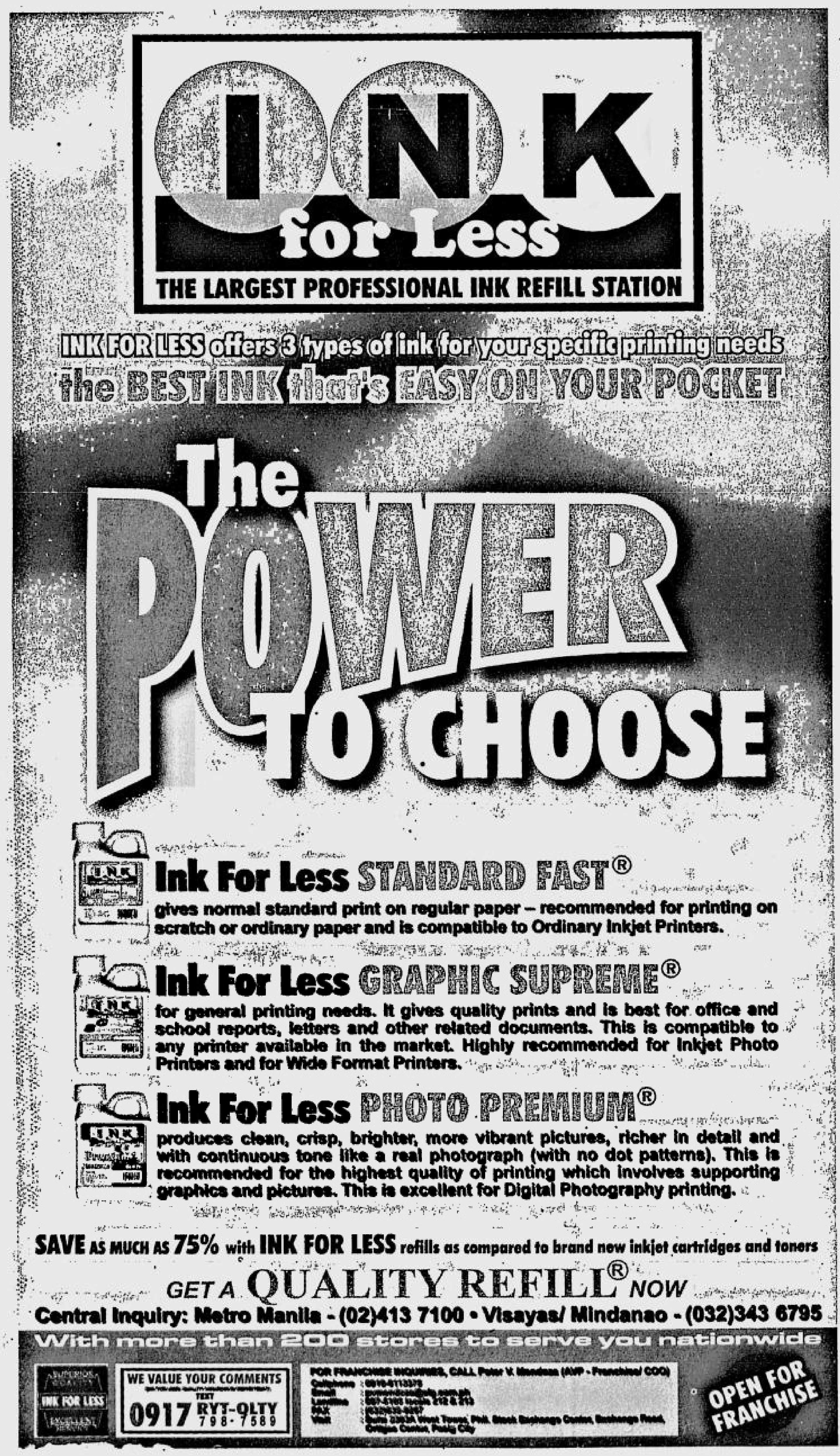
Santos said the NBP had guards posted for Lumanog at the NKTI. These could have easily been instructed to bring him back to the NBP "provided that everything is in order."

Torture

Since his transplant operation, Lumanog has been taking medications that intended to lower his immunity so that his body will not reject the donated kidney.

Lumanog and four others—Augusto Santos, Cesar Fortuna, Rameses de Jesus and Joel de Jesus—were sentenced to death by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court on Aug. 11, 1999, for the killing of Abadilla in 1996.

They have filed a petition before the Supreme Court asking for a retrial, claiming they were tortured to confess to the crime.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Atienza to ask GMA to make Taft decision

By Tarra Quismundo

MANILA Mayor Joselito Atienza will try to pull some strings to stop legislation that would change the name of Taft Avenue to Sen. Jose W. Diokno Avenue.

And the string may have to lead all the way to Malacañang and to President Macapagal-Arroyo herself.

"I will bring the matter to the President and I will ask her to veto it," said Atienza in an interview last week.

Bills passed

Senate Bill 2011, which would rename one of Manila's main thoroughfares, was passed by the Senate last week.

It was sponsored by Senate President Franklin Drilon.

Its counterpart bill in the House, authored by Representatives Juan Miguel Zubiri of Bukidnon and Apolinario Lozada of Negros Occidental, have also been approved.

Atienza decried that the lawmakers did not even consult with the local government regarding the bill.

He said he and other local officials were not aware of the bill and only learned of it after it had been passed in second reading, and read about it in the newspapers.

"I do not question their power to legislate, but they should have at least considered local sensitivities," said the mayor.

Atienza said further that the Filipinos are already used to calling the road Taft Avenue, and added that it is already part of history.

The avenue, which stretches from Edsa in Pasay City to P. Burgos Street in Manila, was named after William Howard Taft.

Taft was the first appointed Governor-General of the Philippines in 1901. He later became United States President and Supreme Court Chief Justice.

Ties that bind

Atienza was hoping that the President would listen to his appeal.

The mayor, who was a staunch supporter of ousted President Joseph Estrada, has recently openly backed Ms Macapagal and her bid to run for reelection.

Atienza said that he would also bring up the issue with Drilon.

Drilon is the chair of the Liberal Party, of which Atienza is national executive vice president.

Stiff fines to keep Edsa buses in line

By Margaux Ortiz

STAY in line or pay the fine.

That will be the policy which the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) will enforce to make bus operators and drivers strictly follow the Organized Bus Route on Edsa.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said the Metro Manila Council already approved a resolution that would impose a new set of fines on erring drivers.

For instance, drivers who ignore the interval timers at designated loading and unloading areas will have to pay P750 for the first offense, P750 plus one week suspension of the driver's license for the second offense, and P750 plus one month suspension of the driver's license for the third offense.

Battle of wits

Fernando said they would be modifying the timers so that drivers, who have "very unruly natures," would not be able to outwit them.

"We still have to place additional features on the timers so the signals will be clear to the drivers," Fernando said.

The resolution also said that drivers who exceed the time limit prescribed for loading and loading passengers and goods will have to pay P500.

Bus drivers who bypass designated terminals or loading bays will have to pay P1,000 for the first offense, P1,000 plus one week suspension of the driver's license for the second offense, and P1,000 plus one month suspension of the driver's license for the third offense.

The MMDA chair also said the fines would instill discipline and ensure that the bus drivers would secure color-coded queue numbers at designated dispatch points, display these on the right side of the bus's windshield, and surrender the cards at designated exit points.

Vandals penalized

Penalties will also prevent bus drivers from defacing queue cards aimed to ensure that they would stay in line.

According to the resolution, buses running without the queue cards and bus drivers who fail to surrender these at designated exit areas will be penalized with P1,000 for the first offense, P1,000 plus one week suspension of the driver's license for the second offense, and P1,000 plus one month suspension of the driver's license for the third offense.

Drivers who deface queue cards by writing obscene drawings and words on them will have to pay P500.

SPORTS TV
Compiled by L. Mangulat

AMERICAN FOOTBALL: NFL Superbowl XXXVIII; 7 a.m.; ESPN (r-8:30 p.m.) and Destiny 17 (r-5:30 p.m.)—The granddaddy of American sports takes place in Houston, Texas, as the AFC champion New England Patriots seek a second title against the NFC kings, the Carolina Panthers.

BASKETBALL: NBA-Cavs vs Wizards; 8:30 p.m. (r-10 p.m.); Solar Sports; Lakers vs Raptors; 7 p.m.; IBC 13—King James and his Cleveland teammates head to their nation's capital while LA travels north to take on Toronto.

SPORTS

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AS IN his breakthrough victory in Wimbledon, Federer kneels to celebrate his straight-sets win over Safin.
REUTERS

Federer takes Aussie Open

Swiss star justifies No. 1 ranking

MELBOURNE—Roger Federer put a quick end to Marat Safin's exhausting run in the Australian Open. The Swiss star won his second Grand Slam title and solidified his No. 1 ranking Sunday, beating Safin, 7-6 (3), 6-4, 6-2.

"What a great start to the year for me, to win the Australian Open and become No. 1 in the world," Federer said.

Federer, who claimed his first major at Wimbledon last year, won the match in 2 hours, 15 minutes when Safin—who tied a Grand Slam record by playing 30 sets—hit a forehand long on championship point.

"(Safin) had to battle. He's been longer on the court than me, way longer," Federer said. "It's really nice to see him back. He's a great guy and a great player."

The 22-year-old Federer, who clinched the top spot in the rankings with a semifinal victory over Juan Carlos Ferrero, hasn't lost a set in his two Grand Slam final appearances. He beat Mark Philippoussis in straight sets at Wimbledon last year.

Safin beat top-seeded Andy Roddick in the quarterfinals and ended Andre Agassi's 26-match Australian Open winning streak in the semifinals. *AP*

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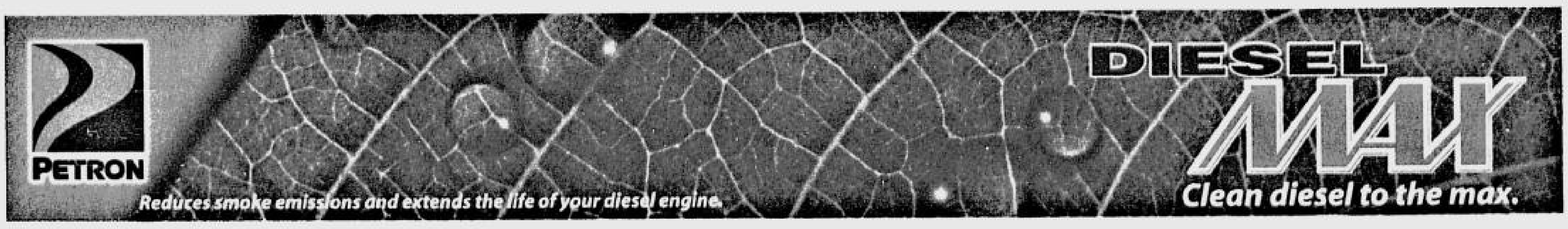

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Gejon bags Fedelatin title

Filipino miniflyweight beats Panamanian as referee stops bout

GEJON: Major championship

By Salven L. Lagumbay

CEBU CITY—Cebuano Yukka "Wiseguy" Gejon of the Wakee Salud Stable yesterday won the Fedelatin minifly title over Panamanian Carlos Melo at the El Poliedro de Caracas in Venezuela.

The sketchy report received by Salud from Japanese promoter Joe Koizumi said Gejon, who was leading in the scorecards, was declared winner by technical decision when the fight was stopped possibly due to cuts suffered by one of the fighters.

The win earned Gejon the No.1 spot in the WBA's 105-lb ranks where Venezuelan Noel Arambulet is considered a "champion in recess."

Gejon raised his unbeaten streak to 18 wins with 10 KOs and set him up for a world title crack within this year.

The lanky, sweet-punching Gejon, who is also ranked WBC No. 4, prepared for the Melo fight shuttling between the ALA and Flores gyms for sparring and training sessions. Among his sparmates was brother Elmer, who last Friday took the Philippine minifly crown with a unanimous decision verdict over the unorthodox-fighting Jun Arlos.

In the main event, Venezuelan Juan Landaeta prevailed with a unanimous decision win over Chana Porpaoin to win the interim WBA 105-lb title.

Jorge Linares took the Fedelatin superbantam crown with a 12-round unanimous verdict over Hugo Soto while Vicente Mosquera prevailed over Frenchman Ali Oubaali to win the Fedelatin superfeatherweight crown.

Gejon is expected to arrive today with trainer Brix Flores.

MVP known before vital third game

THE PHILIPPINE Basketball League will honor tomorrow the Most Valuable Player (MVP) of the Platinum Cup and other players who made the 2003 season a truly remarkable year in their blooming careers.

The league will also recognize players who have contributed to the development of the league through their sheer talent and good behavior off the court.

These players will receive the Commissioner's Awards.

"We have to honor players not only for their excellent games but also for being role models for the youth. This is our own humble way of helping our country," said Commissioner Chino Trinidad.

Welcoat's 1-2 punch, James Yap and Jojo Tangkay, show the way in the MVP derby based on their solid performances in the semifinals. Fash Liquid Laundry Detergent stars Peter June Simon and Rich Alvarez are also major contenders.

"This is perhaps the closest race for the MVP award in years. Kaya excited ang mga fans na manood ng (This heightens interest in the) title series," added Trinidad.

The PBL Platinum Achievement Awards ceremony is set at 3 p.m., one hour before the pivotal Game 3 between Welcoat and Fash Liquid. The best-of-five title series is tied after Fash ruled Game 2 in double overtime, 84-80.

Tangkay leads in statistical points after the semis with 668, just 14 points ahead of Yap, who was made the No. 2 pick by Purefoods in last month's PBA Annual Draft.

Aside from being honored as the country's top amateur cager by the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) during its awards rites last Jan. 9, the 6-foot-3 Yap also romped off with the UAAP MVP.

For Alvarez, winning the MVP could be his crowning glory after being named as the pro league's No.1 pick by Shell.

NOT SO FAST: Ateneo's Jason Castanilla tries to stop UST's Thomas Liao from going for a goal in their UAAP game yesterday at the Ateneo grounds. Ateneo won, 2-0.
AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Winless Blu Boys tackle Canadians

Team standings:
Pool A—New Zealand 3-0, Cånada 1-1, South Africa 1-1, Australia 1-1, Netherlands 1-1, Samoa 1-2, Philippines 0-2; **Pool B**—USA 2-0, Czech Republic 2-0, Japan 1-0, Argentina 1-0, Great Britain 0-2, Bostwana 0-2, Hongkong 0-2.

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—Persistent rains washed away Sunday's scheduled games in the XI men's world softball championship and the RP Blu Boys hope the weather break would serve them in good stead when they return to action against Canada Monday.

"Make or break *na ito, kaya sana bumalik ang laro ng mga bata* (I hope we show our old form)," said RP head coach Reynaldo "Baby" Manzanares.

The Blu Boys bowed to the Australians and the Venezuelans in their first two outings in the championship at the Smokefree Ballpark here.

On Saturday, the South Africans stunned the Dutch, 4-3, the Samoans toppled the Canadians, 3-1, and reigning champ New Zealand stopped the Aussies, 9-2.

Veteran Vita repulses Valle

VETERAN campaigner Johnson Vita bounced back in the last five racks to outlast Gandy Valle, 5-4, yesterday to retain the crown in the "Search for Tanduay the No. 1 Billiards Player" at the Robinsons Malls.

The 51-year-old Vita of Nagcarlan, Laguna, was clearly outplayed in the early going by his 24-year-old rival but regained his composure in the fifth rack to post his second win in the challenge matches sponsored by Tanduay the No. 1 Rhum, Robinsons Malls, Accel, Hope Cigarettes and Rommel's Billiards—the official table.

Valle seized a 3-1 lead but Vita came back to take a 4-3 lead. Next week, Vita will take on two more challengers.

Lhuillier cagers rip Manilans, cop title

CEBU CITY—Host M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala leaned on veterans Bong Marata and Bruce Dacia to whip Mail & More MayniLA, 97-78, Saturday and rule the 2004 Panasonic-National Basketball Conference (NBC) Sinulog Cup tournament at the New Cebu City Coliseum here.

Marata knocked in 21 points and Dacia added 13 as the Cebuanos swept their four assignments in the tournament sponsored by Panasonic Phils. and supported by Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Drinking Water, BJ Star Logistics and Molten Basketballs.

The Cebuanos surged to a 31-18 lead after 10 minutes and never looked back.

Sulpicio Lines-Adamson finished third by nosing out Spring Cooking Oil-San Pablo, 81-79, in the other match.

Mark Abadia scored three points in the final minute to spell the difference.

Dacia was eventually named most valuable player and member of the Mythical Five together with MayniLA's Ernani Epondulan and Mark Yee, Spring's Rolly Menor and Abadia.

Scores:

FIRST GAME

ADAMSON 81—Abadia 23, Bono 13, Cabahug 12, Poloyapoy 11, Alonzo 7, Tagupa 4, Tiongco 4, Hugnatan 2.

SPRING-SP 79—Robillos 16, Manuel 14, Tolentino 11, Reyes 11, Limbo 10, Rol Menor 10, Taguines 4, Mendoza 3.

Quarters: 21-17, 43-41, 61-64, 81-79.

SECOND GAME

LHUILLIER 97—Marata 21, Dacia 13, Laygo 12, Lumanlas 12, Aying 11, Canoneo 9, Enriquez 8, Cantona 6, Ocanada 4, Smith 1.

MAYNILA 78—Epondulan 20, Doruelo 20, Corbin 12, Yee 8, Magdadaro 6, Cenica 4, Alfafaro 2.

Quarters: 31-18, 48-38, 72-61, 97-78.

Strict handicap requirements for Mango Tee

HANDICAP monitoring in the Mango Tee—the member-guest invitational of the Alabang Country Club presented by Smart Communications—will be very strict as in the previous years as organizers try to ensure that the tournament results will be kept free from questions and controversies.

Mango Tee participants are required to submit their latest handicap club-certified cards either from the Information Professionals Inc. (IPI) or the National Golf Association of the Philippines before they tee off for the 20th edition of the tourney set Feb. 5-8.

Foreign entries need USGA-certified cards which will only be accepted after proper verification.

The handicap committee, headed by Caloy Coscolluela, said they reserve the right to adjust handicaps based on the performance of each player or even disqualify entries for not declaring the right handicaps. Those failing to meet the requirements will carry a handicap of zero.

"We have been quite successful in the previous stagings of the Mango Tee in tightening the noose for sand-baggers and we make sure that there is a strict implementation of the rules since the integrity of the event is at stake here," he said.

The final countdown is on for the event with the first batch of the 512 entries set to play their morning and afternoon tee-offs this Thursday. The tourney ends on Sunday and will be capped by the awarding ceremonies. A Mitsubishi Lancer, among other prizes, will be raffled off.

Mitsubishi Motors Phils., Pilipinas Shell, Taylormade adidas, Citimotors and Allied Domecq/Carlos I are the major sponsors. Sharp, Standard Chartered Bank, The Turf Co. and Food Link are area sponsors and FedEx, Nestle, Pepsi and Security Bank/Diners Club premium sponsors.

Vilog rules triathlon on borrowed shoes

By Trina Ibarle, *Contributor*

GUIMARAS PROVINCE—George Vilog overhauled his main rivals running on borrowed shoes in the 10-K leg yesterday to rule the men's elite division of the Guimaras National Triathlon Championship here.

The 27-year-old Army man from Davao clocked 2 hours, 23 minutes and 43 seconds in winning his first national title that earned him a major share of the P100,000 purse put up by the National Triathlon Association of the Philippines.

Noel Salvador, a lifeguard at the University of St. La Salle-Bacolod, nipped RP team coach Peter Gonzales for runner-up honors by just a second with a time of 2:24:04.

Vilog was on top after the 40K bike leg only to find his running shoes missing in the second transition stop.

The second-running Salvador and Gonzales smoothly stepped into their running gear and went on to grab the lead from Vilog.

But national team assistant coach Loi Rafols offered his running shoes to Vilog and the Davao bet didn't let the opportunity go to waste as he regained the lead from Salvador and Gonzales just 2 kilomers into the 10-K run.

"*Nasa kundisyon naman ako. Sa* bike *pa lang alam ko na akin na ito, kaso sapatos ko ang naging problema* (I was in good condition. I was confident of winning during the bike leg, but my shoes became a problem," Vilog said.

The borrowed shoes left Vilog with blisters at the finish, but they were minor discomforts for the champion, who assured himself of a slot in the seven-member national team to the Asian Triathlon Championship in April.

Salvador was also happy with his finish despite minimal preparation and a sprained left ankle he suffered two weeks ago.

Sandra Araullo triumphed in the women's Elite Open and the under-23 division in 2:55:22. Her two-month training in Queenstown, New Zealand in preparation for the Asian triathlon paid off as she overtook swim leader Mylene Jarina in the bike event.

The 22-year-old Araullo also attributed her win to the absence of defending champion Ani Karina de Leon.

Jarina salvaged second place in 2:58:01 with national cyclist Bing Alto finishing a far third in 3:10:34.

Meanwhile, Joseph Alden Guillen and Asian Aquathlon champion Josephine Pilapil dominated the sprint events in the junior division.

Guillen, 17, from San Juan, Metro Manila, asserted himself in the bike and run stages to win in 1:26:18.

The 16-year-old Pilapil, from Manila, came out of the swim event first and stayed there for good, clocking 1:29:21.

Mayor Felipe Hilan Nava of Jordan, Guimaras graced the awarding ceremony.

Who are the traitors; PSC going bankrupt?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THAT was a very serious charge made last week by national bowling great Bong Coo.

It should have merited immediate action not only from the Philippine Sports Commission, or the very busy President Macapagal-Arroyo herself.

Police authorities could have also taken action against the accused foreigner.

Ms Coo, a senatorial candidate for the May polls, shot it hard on RP bowling coach Purvis Granger after the American supposedly stole a slot in the national team to win the rich Aviva Asian Grand Slam Tour.

Why? Because Granger, hired to transfer bowling know-how and technology, had usurped the rights of his players.

It was clearly the act of a traitor Granger had perpetrated.

***

Coo did not mince words in mouthing her protest.

The thing is that she did not do it for herself.

She did it in the name of nationalism. She takes my vote for that noble gesture.

We also salute The Tribune and its fighting editor Ninez Cacho-Olivarez for playing up the Coo protest in its sports section, where it was the main piece for two straight days.

My *kumpadre* Fred Lumba readily expressed elation upon hearing news that Granger was due for outright ouster following the violation.

But, then, who was supposed to kick Granger out?

Not the Philippine Bowling Congress which has definitely profited from Granger's coaching.

The agency that should have acted promptly was the Philippine Sports Commission.

It was the PSC which hired Granger to coach the RP bowling team.

***

Now listen. It was surprising that the PSC reacted as though it was the first time it had heard of Granger playing for the RP squad abroad.

The fact is that the American had previously been featured and seen on ESPN donning the RP colors and rolling the tenpin ball, expertly and sharply of course, for the Philippines several times.

From what we heard, a very surprised PSC chair Eric Buhain was supposed to have ordered a probe.

For the record, Granger topped the Aviva Grand Slam and pocketed a neat $20,000.

Our very own Liza del Rosario, sensational again, won the distaff side of the rich bowlfest.

Anyway, Ms Coo was livid because, other than violate his contract, Granger also effectively robbed another top Filipino bowler, clearly in the running for the championship, of the money prize and the glory.

***

Will there be an investigation?

Will Granger be made to pack up and take the first flight out?

Sorry, folks. Sorry Ms Coo.

It seems the PSC itself will have to be included in the projected investigation after Granger next made a startling revelation.

Granger told the INQUIRER's Marc Anthony Reyes that he was forced to compete and bid for the big money in the Aviva Grand Slam because he needed the dollars very badly.

Yes, Granger cried that he had not gotten his salary from the PSC for a total of three months now.

He was supposed to get $2,000 a month, exclusive of rent.

Granger swore that his landlady on Roxas Boulevard had already served him his eviction papers.

As expected, the PSC denied the charge.

***

Ed Mateo, PSC executive director, said Granger was lying.

This was the same PSC bigwig who coolly denied his agency had imported horses using the government license.

But a deeper probe later bared the PSC had indeed brought in racehorses with the purpose of turning these to the equestrian association, a cockeyed defense that became the butt of widespread joke.

Meanwhile, president Steve Hontiveros of the Philippine Bowling Congress next cleared Granger of any misconduct.

He said the Aviva series was not an official international competition but an open commercial tournament wherein athletes need not be part of a national contingent in order to qualify.

Hontiveros stressed Granger did not violate any existing rule as far as participation in international tournaments is concerned.

Well, the air has got to be cleared in this case.

It should be readily determined who really played traitor.

Or is it true the PSC is going bankrupt?

Granger could've indeed stolen the chances of a true-blue Pinoy winning and shining abroad.

But did the PSC play the bigger traitor for failing to pay the hired talent his contracted fee?

SPORTSWATCH

Dandan bags 2 titles in Philta tourney

SIXTH-SEEDED Kyle Dandan upset top seed Michael Basco, 6-2, 6-2, yesterday to capture the boys' 18-under title in the Philta Classic 1 Age-Group Championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. It was Dandan's second straight final win over Basco following his triumph in the Milo Tennis Cup last year. The 14-year-old Dandan, who played in the prestigious Orange Bowl Juniors Championships two years ago, also annexed the 16-under title with a resounding 6-3, 6-0 victory over No. 8 Pablo Olivarez II. Olivarez had earlier bagged the 14-under title over second seed Patrick Arevalo, 6-0, 6-2. The boys' 12-under title went to fifth seed Francis Casey Alcantara, who pulled off a 6-3, 6-1 win over second seed Bernardine Siso, while top seed Pocholo Macalino took the unisex 10-under title over second seed Jacob Lagman, 6-3, 7-5. In the girls division, top seed Jessica Agra rallied past second seed Trudy Amoranto, 7-6 (5), 2-6, 7-5, for the 16-under title and later claimed the 14-under title via a 6-2, 6-0 victory over second seed Nikki Manalo. Top-ranked Bien Zoleta survived second seed Catherine Flores, 3-6, 6-2, 6-4, for the 18-under title while Zhane Quitara conquered top seed Sarah Jane Lim, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, to clinch the 12-under title.

Surigao's Alvans gain 3 Milo net finals

BUTUAN—Juv Alvan of Surigao City ousted Rophie Santos, 6-0, 6-4, Saturday to barge into the final of the boys' 18-under division of the 2004 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop at the Luz Village Tennis Club here. Juv's feat was duplicated by younger brother Juke Alvan, who edged Leo Fernandez, 6-0, 5-7, 7-5, to arrange a championship showdown with Cagayan de Oro's Noelito Pacana, who won over Bernard Bundac, 6-1, 6-7, 6-3, in the boys' 16-under bracket. Other finalists in the CTW-organized netfest celebrating 40 years of Milo in the Philippine market are Rorigen Iducos and Leandro Fernandez in the boys' 12-under; Juke and Pacana in the boys' 14-under, and Alana Ursal and Nikki de Dios in the girls' 16-under divisions. The tournament is also supported by Wilson balls, adidas and Sports Kids.

Garcia, Comia rule Pila footrace

ROBERT Glen Garcia of Linga National High School and Maricar Comia of Pedro Guevara National High School ruled the Beam-Zest-O Patakbong Pinoy last Saturday in Pila, Laguna. Jhon Lery Villarino (second) and Lester Landan (second) completed the domination of Linga bets in the boys' division while their female schoolmates, Kathleen Nograda and Kim Mangrobang, finished second and third, respectively, in the race also known as the Pila Heritage run. The event was held in coordination with the Pila Historical Society Foundation Inc. and organized by the Media Runners and Sports Promotions. Completing the top 10 in the boys' division are Michael Saniel, Ronel Cabrera, Aaron Borje, Alberto Flores, Benjie Mole, Joselito Valentin and Romnick Bornilia while making it to the winners' row in the distaff side were Maricris Chavez, Jasmin Chavez, last year's champion Maricel Mariano, Cecilia Constantino, Rosemarie Mendoza, Rona Mendoza and Angel Labao. Meanwhile, registration is still ongoing for the Manila leg set this Sunday at the Rajah Sulaiman Park. Interested parties may call Direct Link Runners Club president Romy Morales at 0916-7079205.

Canlas captures executive chess

ENGINEER Ravel Canlas outlasted 2001 champion Dennis San Juan, 2-1, over the weekend to win the Philippine Executive Active Chess Express (PEACE) finals at the Land Bank Plaza in Malate, Manila. Canlas' triumph in the best-of-three showdown brought the 38-year-old project engineer of CGM Builders his first PEACE Elite section title. Canlas won the first game then drew the second and the third. Musician Christopher Castellano, meanwhile, swept math professor Rey Reyes, 2-0, in the finals to bag the title in the Classic section. The grand finals was sponsored by Belgosa Media Systems, C.M. Iligan Realty and Development Corp., Consortium Management Research Center and Land Bank. It is the culmination of an almost yearlong elimination phase organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia (ACCA) Inc. Land Bank vice president Conrado Roxas said that Land Bank, ACCA and PEACE "have become allies in promoting chess in the country." In barging into the finals, Canlas polished off lawyer Quirino Sagario, 2-0, while San Juan surprised physical therapist Ryan Ruiz, 2-0.

Ateneo grade schoolers triumph thrice

ATENEO'S grade school tennis team, composed of Daniel Luis Macalino, Mark Balce, Tomas Apacible II, Juan Pocholo Macalino and Calvin Charles Canlas, made a grand slam of sorts by topping the tournaments of the Philippine Athletic Youth Association (Paya), the Private School Development Association (Prada) and the Inter-School Tennis Association (Ista) recently. Balce, the most consistent among the young netters coached by Adelo Abadia, was named most valuable player of the Ista tourney. Abadia, the country's No. 3 player and a member of the Davis Cup team, said the team's victories were a testimony to the school's sound tennis program.

Guiao, Chua, Carlos PSA Forum guests

RED Bull coach Yeng Guiao and team manager Tony Chua join Louie Carlos of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) as this week's PSA Forum guests at the Manila Pavilion. Guiao and Chua are to talk about the team's coming campaign in the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) Fiesta Conference, while the Pagcor-sponsored RP cycling team's bid in the Tour de Langkawi in Malaysia will be discussed by Carlos. The session, sponsored by Agfa Colors and Red Bull, begins at 10:30 a.m.

Cup fighters headline derby at Araneta

A SLAMBANG showdown featuring big-time cockers and some of their remaining fighters from the recent World Slashers Cup resumes at 5 p.m. today in the National Cockers Association (NCA) 7-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum. More than 50 fights are on tap in today's 3-cock elimination round, according to hosts Gov. Ito Yñares of Rizal, Rep. Claude Bautista of Davao and Benjamin and Franklin Bautista. The championship round is set Wednesday. Among the World Slasher Cup standouts are solo champion Rudy Salud and Lito Orillaza, runners-up Eddie Araneta, Ronnie Puno of Pangasinan, Rep. Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco, former ambassador Danding Cojuangco, newspaper publisher Butch Macasaet, Jun Topacio, sportsman Matt Bitanga and Dicky Lim. Salud and Orillaza's bet, Winning Time Jobo, posted a rare 8-0 (win-loss) slate in the WLC, duplicating the feat of Patrick Antonio in 1997.

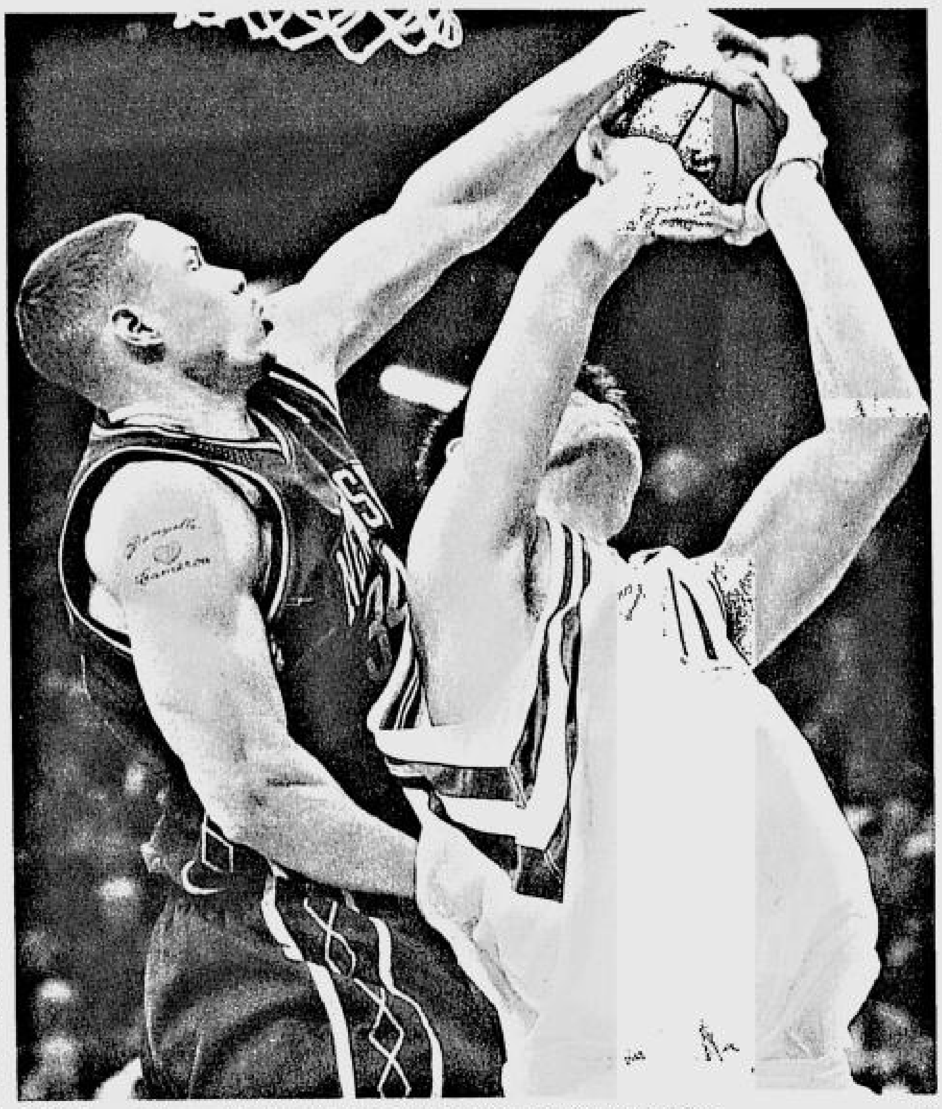
Ex-PSA prexy's brod interred today

FIDEL B. Villanueva, brother of former Philippine Sportswriters Association president Augusto "Gus" Villanueva, will be cremated today. His body will be brought to the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium after the 1 p.m. Mass at the Mary Mother of Good Counsel Parish in Marcelo Green Village, Parañaque City. Villanueva, who died Wednesday, left behind his wife Lucrezia, daughters Lea and Loi, who arrived from Texas Friday night, grandsons Gabriel and Thomas, sister Ading, and brothers Gus and Munding.

TEACH 'EM YOUNG: Former PBA players Ed Cordero (with mike) and Chito Loyzaga show youngsters how to defend during a recent training drill of the SMC All-Stars Skill Builders Camp in Siargao, Surigao del Norte. The All-Stars, through San Miguel Beer, Ginebra San Miguel and Star Margarine, visited the island as part of San Miguel Corporation's grassroots development program.

NBA ROUNDUP

Nuggets, Nets trip foes



NEW Jersey's Aaron Williams (left) blocks a shot by Houston's Yao Ming. AP

DALLAS—Carmelo Anthony hit a go-ahead jumper with 2:22 left, then added four straight freethrows in the closing seconds to help the Denver Nuggets beat the Dallas Mavericks, 107-102, Saturday after trailing by 20 points in the third quarter.

"We kept our focus. We buckled down defensively and tried to get a basket every time down the court," Anthony said. "They left us open. NBA players are supposed to make those."

The Nuggets sealed the win by hitting 10 straight freethrows in the final 29 seconds after Mavericks coach Don Nelson was called for a technical foul.

"I guess you have to take some bad with the good," Nelson said. "We've been good for a long time. We let our guard down in the second half."

Anthony led the Nuggets with 26 points. Andre Miller scored 21 of his 25 after halftime.

Michael Finley led the Mavericks with 37 points, including 20 in the second quarter when Dallas appeared to take control. Antoine Walker and Dirk Nowitzki each scored 16.

Dallas has lost consecutive games following a season-best nine-game winning streak.

In Houston, Kenyon Martin scored 21 of his 27 points in the second half as New Jersey overcame a slow start to rally past Houston, 88-77, giving Lawrence Frank a 3-0 record as interim coach.

Frank is unbeaten since replacing Byron Scott on Jan. 26, and the Nets have won four in a row. New Jersey took the lead for good at 72-71 on a pair of freethrows by Martin with 7:20 to play.

Jason Kidd finished with 21 points for the Nets, and Richard Jefferson had 17.

Steve Francis broke out of a shooting slump to lead the Rockets with 26 points.

In New York, Stephon Marbury scored 33 of his 35 points in the first three quarters against his former team, and some untimely missed freethrows by Phoenix helped New York defeat the Suns, 110-105.

In Orlando, Florida, Marko Jaric scored 23 points, and Quentin Richardson and Elton Brand added 21 apiece to lead Los Angeles Clippers past Orlando, 115-106.

Magic star Tracy McGrady missed the game to attend his aunt's funeral. He is expected to be back in time for Tuesday's game at Minnesota.

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Chauncey Billups hit two freethrows with 0.4 seconds left to give Detroit an 80-78 victory over Memphis.

Complete results:

Denver 107, Dallas 102; New Jersey 88, Houston 77; Atlanta 93, Milwaukee 83; LA Clippers 115, Orlando 106; Detroit 80, Memphis 78; New York 110, Phoenix 105; Miami 94, New Orleans 70; Indiana 99, Boston 98; San Antonio 85, Utah 81; Portland 102, Chicago 95 (OT); Sacramento 110, Seattle 103.

Jimenez tops JW Classic

BANGKOK, Thailand—Spanish veteran Miguel Angel Jimenez claimed his eighth European title Sunday by winning a neck-to-neck race with Denmark's Thomas Bjorn to claim the Johnnie Walker Classic.

Exchanging the lead with the big Dane at the Alpine Golf and Sports Club throughout the afternoon, the 40-year-old Jimenez proved more consistent in the closing holes to outclass the three-day leader by two strokes, carding a 4-under-68 for an aggregate 17-under-par 271.

Bjorn squandered the lead he maintained over the first three rounds when he sank a shot into the water to take a bogey on the 17th hole. He ended the final day 1-under 70 for a total 15-under-273, missing the chance of an eighth European PGA championship.

Defending champion Ernie Els of South Africa hit a 69 on the fourth day to card an 11-under-par 275 and take joint 10th.

Meanwhile, in Scottsdale, Arizona, Chris DiMarco shot his way into a share of the third-round lead in the FBR Open, shooting a 7-under 64 to join Jonathan Kaye at 14-under 199.

Kaye carded a 66 Saturday, making all five of his birdies on the back nine, and second-round leader Phil Mickelson was one shot back after a 68. *AP*

Fans want Torion back

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

COMMISSIONER Noli Eala is bound to make a lot of PBA fans very happy if he acts favorably on the appeal of Red Bull point guard Jimwell Torion for reconsideration of his eight-month suspension for committing a hard foul on Talk 'N Text guard Jimmy Alapag during their make-or-break game on Nov. 19.

With Torion playing in the Philippine Basketball Association, the fans said they are assured of total commitment, of getting back their money's worth. "Torion always plays to win," they stressed. "He's good to watch because of his raw courage, speed, long-range shooting and timing."

The 28-year-old, 5-foot-9 Torion is liked by many for being honest and thoroughly straightforward. When he was sacked after testing positive for drug abuse last April, he admitted—instead of contesting—that he only tried the banned substance to celebrate a team victory with old friends in Cebu City.

"I admire Jimwell for his guts in admitting his mistake and his effort to rehabilitate himself," Eala said after reinstating the repentant player in the league. "Torion's actions after that single unfortunate event in his life are very laudable."

When he was slapped an eight-month suspension and fined P70,000—the longest and biggest ever in the 30-year history of the PBA—for breaking the nose of Alapag, Torion offered no excuses for his misconduct and apologized to Alapag, his fans and his team.

"*Hindi ko po naman sinasadya ang nangyari* (It was an accident)," Torion said. "I didn't mean to do it. I'm sorry, Jimmy."

Before Torion's eight-month ban, the longest suspension was the four months slapped on Rudy Distrito of Sunkist, who was sacked by then PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino in 1995 for committing a deliberate foul on Alaska's Jeffrey Cariaso. Bernardino also suspended for three games and fined P40,000—then the biggest—Formula Shell's Jay Mendoza for starting a free-for-all by intentionally elbowing Ginebra's Wilmer Ong on the head during the closing minutes of the game which Shell won, 84-63. Most recently, during Game 2 of the San Miguel Beer-Coca-Cola Reinforced Conference title series last Dec. 3, SMB's Danny Ildefonso was slapped only a one-game suspension and fined P30,000 despite intentionally hitting with a closed fist Coke import Tee McClary.

In the case of Torion, the Red Bull point guard did not intentionally hit Alapag with a closed fist yet he received a penalty much too heavy compared with the light penalties meted out on the other erring PBA players. Where is justice here?

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TRYOUTS NG BAYAN. In a nationwide search covering 22 key cities in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, battle-tested national coaches Dong Vergeire and Boyzie Zamar will be seeking new talents for the national basketball pool.

The project, dubbed as "RP-Cebuana-Lhuillier Tryouts ng Bayan," is aimed at discovering some 20-24 players who will form the core of the national team that will be selected for local and international competitions.

Zamar also said that instead of these promising players going to Manila to try out for the national team, the coaches will be the ones going to them. "This way," Zamar explained, "we would be able to reach out to more players in the countryside who may have enormous talent but are not given the proper break."

A two-pronged program, the project is not only aimed at seeking players for the national team but also to discover young basketball hopefuls, ages 12 to 17, through outreach basketball clinics.

Mindanao will be the first stop, with the cities of Cagayan de Oro (Feb. 9-11), Davao (Feb. 11-13) and Gen. Santos (Feb. 13-15) as venues. The tour then goes to the Visayas, with Iloilo (Feb. 15-17), Bacolod (Feb. 17-20), Dumaguete (Feb. 20-23), Cebu (Feb. 23-26), Ormoc (Feb. 26-28 and Tacloban (Feb. 28, March 1) as program sites. The Luzon leg will cover Baguio (March 8-11), Pangasinan (March 11-13), Tarlac (March 13-15) and Pampanga (March 15-17), and Albay (March 22-24), Lucena (March 24-27), Batangas (March 27-29), Laguna (March 29-31) and Cavite (March 31-April 1).

Samsung Interscholastics tees off tomorrow

TWENTY-SEVEN exclusive schools will vie for supremacy in three categories in the second Samsung Interscholastics golf championships firing off tomorrow at the Legends course of the Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club in Carmona, Cavite.

Ateneo (college), La Salle-Greenhills (high school) and Poveda (elementary) are back to defend their respective titles in the 54-hole event which has drawn some 120 junior golfers from Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

The registration and official practice round will be held today.

The Samsung Interscholastics is another undertaking of the Korean electronics giant for youth development in sports in tandem with Manila Southwoods.

The event is also sponsored by Tokyo Tokyo, Gatorade, Rogin-E, Dunlop Golf, Rudy Project, Custom Clubmakers and Wilson, with radio stations Killer-Bee, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and 103.5 K-Lite as media partners.

The other teams on the roster are St. Benedict College, Southville IS, La Salle-St. Benilde, Elizabeth Setton, UA&P, Brent IS-Manila, Rosevale-CDO, OB-Montessori, Holy Infant, Reedley IS, Colegio San Agustin, GSCF School, Nazareth, Miriam College, Tabernacle Faith Christian Academy, International British Academy, Moonwalk Elementary, Don Bosco Academy-Pampanga, St. Paul Pasig, Ecole de Monde Michel School, Balara Academy, Quezon City Christian School and Las Piñas National High.

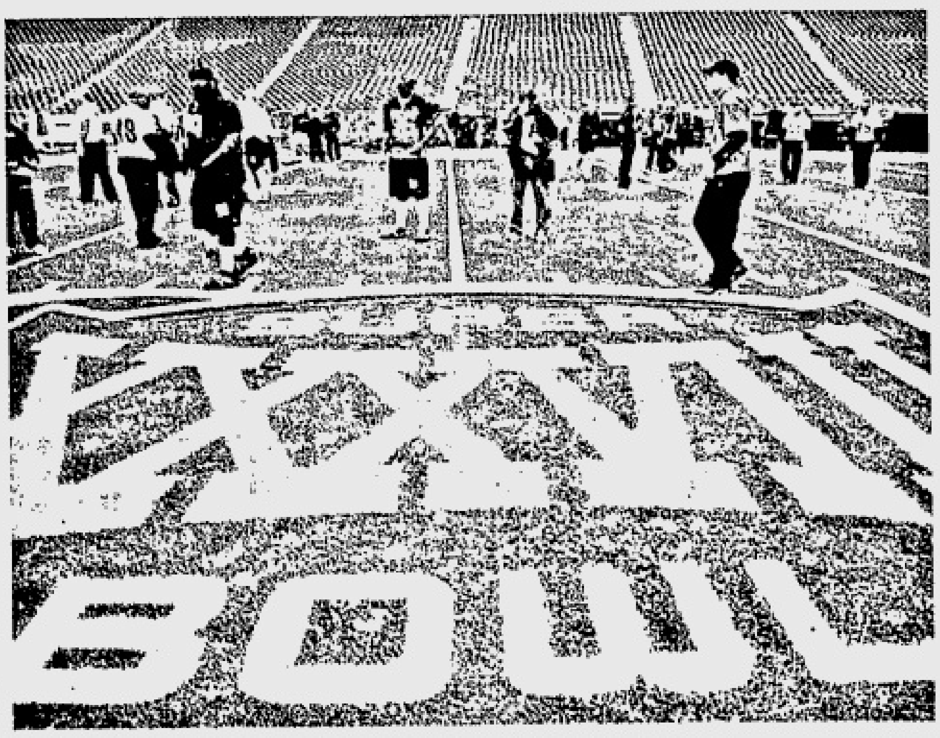
Each team will be made up of three players, with the best two scored under the Stableford System counting the team every round. Aside from the team awards, participants will also be disputing the individual titles in each division, including the special division for kids 10 players and under.

Sang Youl Eom, president of Samsung Electronics Philippines, said he is extremely pleased with the turnout and vowed to give more support to the jungolf movement.

"This is a good indication of the support schools are giving to sports, golf in particular, and we believe that we can even expand this nationwide next year," said Eom.

SUPER BOWL XXXVIII

Players hide as fans hold big party


CAROLINA's Jake Delhomme (in red) and his teammates survey the field. REUTERS

HOUSTON, Texas—The New England Patriots and Carolina Panthers quietly went about their final preparations for Super Bowl XXXVIII as the host city and fans began 24-hours of non-stop partying on Saturday.

Houston will be United States party central this weekend, with the city's two main airports clogged with nearly 1,000 corporate jets that have ferried in a who's who of America's business, entertainment and political elite for a night of merrymaking before the 2330 GMT kick-off on Sunday.

From hip hop to gospel, from backyard barbecues to the posh Houston Club there will be Super Bowl soirées catering to every taste.

The hottest tickets are for exclusive invitation-only bashes for Playboy and Maxim magazines but for most locals, ground zero for Super Bowl festivities will be a street party that has taken over blocks of the downtown area.

The players, however, will not partake in the festivities, with both teams putting rules in place to avoid a repeat of last year when Oakland Raiders center Barret Robbins went missing the night before the game.

Robbins' disappearance forced the Raiders to juggle their offensive line and was considered a factor in their 48-21 thrashing to the underdog Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Last year was not the exception.

In 1999, less than 24 hours after accepting the Bart Starr Award for "high moral character," Atlanta Falcons defensive back Eugene Robinson was arrested for soliciting the night before the game.

The Falcons lost 34-19 to the Denver Broncos.

In an attempt to put temptation out of reach, Panthers' coach John Fox and New England's Bill Belichick will move their teams to new hotels.

"You prepare, do what you can and then you find out how it comes out," said Belichick, after the Patriots completed a light final walk-through practice. "We've done all we can do.

"We were trying to take a little bit of the edge off, give everybody a chance to relax.

"We figured we'd lighten up a little here and be ready to go tomorrow."

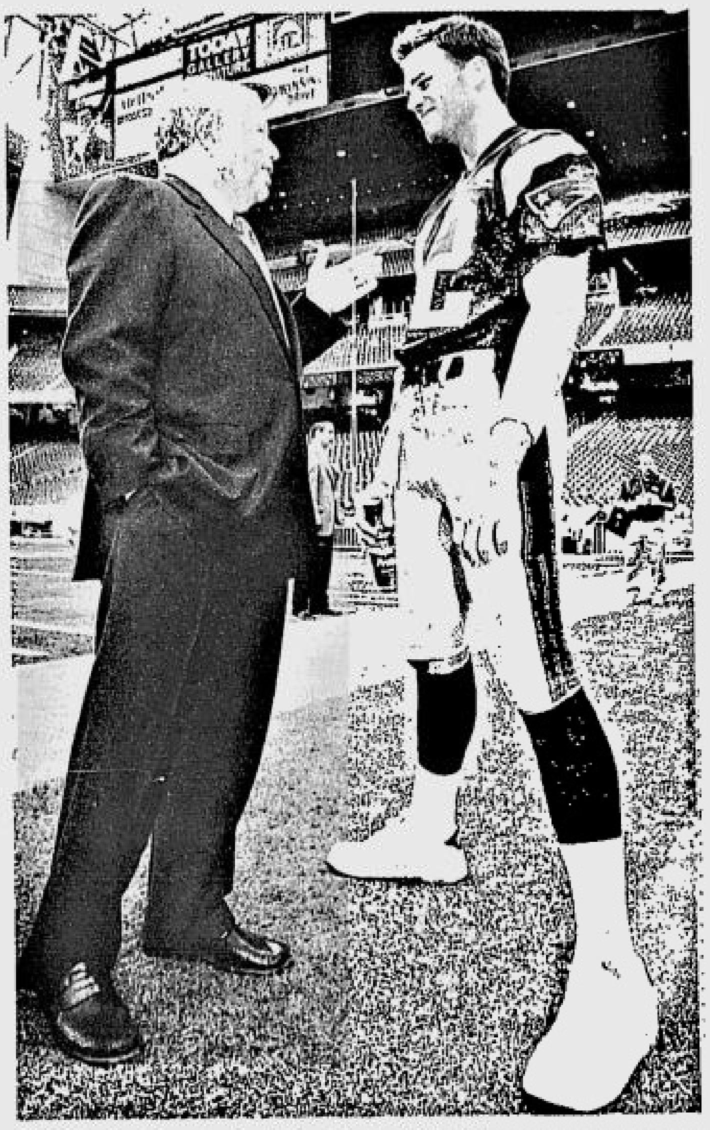
There will, however, be no relaxation for Houston police as they put the finishing touches on elaborate security plans around Saturday's events and Sunday's game.

Every one of the 72,000 ticket holders entering the stadium will pass through one of 90 metal detectors and other screening procedures that were described as similar to those now at place in airports.

More than 5,000 law enforcement officers and security personnel are to be deployed around the stadium on Sunday with some carrying monitoring devices capable of detecting the presence of radioactive or chemical agents. *Reuters*

Live telecast

SPORTS Plus, the newest Filipino sports channel on cable TV (Destiny channel 17), will telecast the Carolina Panthers-New England Patriots duel live at 7 a. m. today (Monday, Feb. 2). The replay will be at 5:30 p.m.


NEW England quarterback Tom Brady talks with team owner Robert Kraft during the Patriots' practice. REUTERS

Sanders, Elway gain Hall of Fame

HOUSTON—The stirring comeback and spectacular escape were unnecessary this time around. John Elway and Barry Sanders were elected into the Pro Football Hall of Fame without a sweat.

As expected, two of the NFL's most dominating and exciting players made it in Saturday on their first attempt.

Elway, the king of the comeback, and Sanders, the master of escape, cemented their status among the all-time greats, and were joined by Bob Brown and Carl Eller.

"Until you said no way, or I was in the locker room taking my uniform off, I was going to try to find a way to win it," said Elway, the winningest quarterback in NFL history with 148 victories.

"I want to tell every guy I played with, 'Thanks,'" he said.

Elway played in five Super Bowls, losing the first three then winning two in a row as his 16-year career wound down.

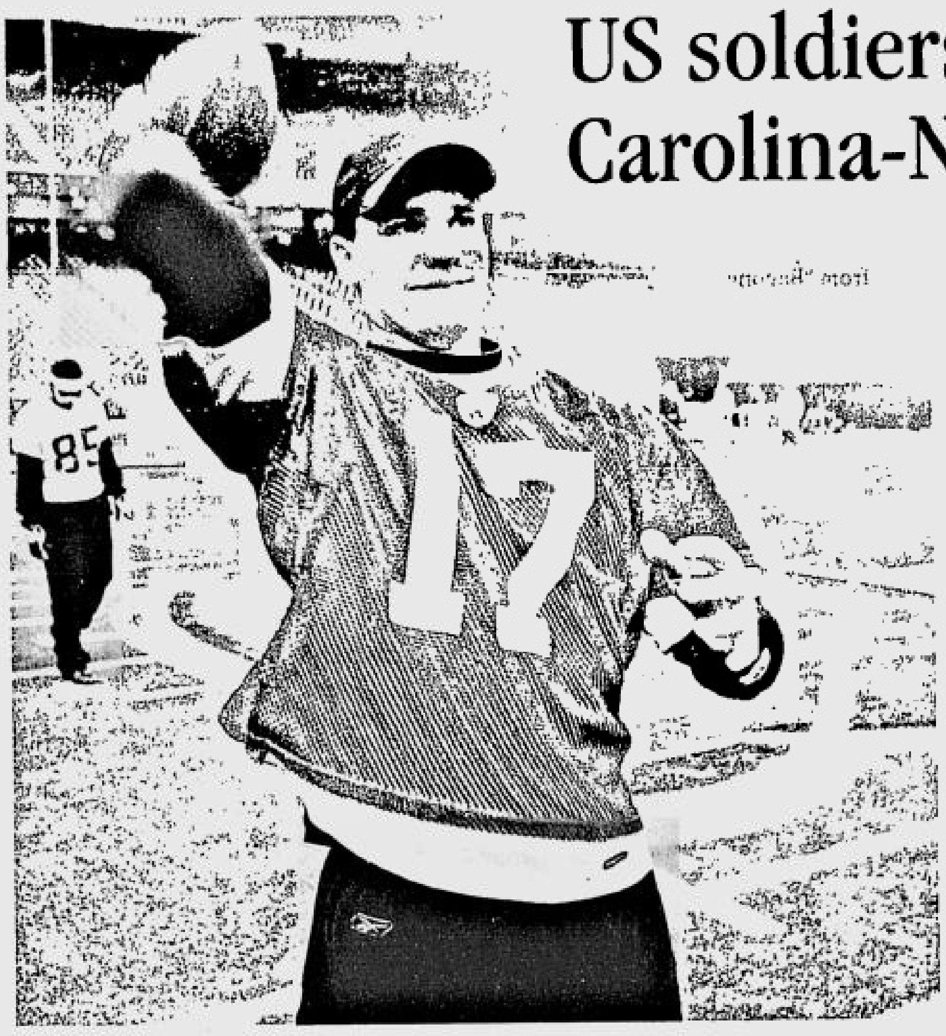
Sanders was the first player to rush for 1,000 yards in his first 10 seasons, leading the league four times. In 1997, he was co-MVP with Brett Favre after rushing for 2,053 yards, only the third player to exceed 2,000 yards in a season. He ran for 100 yards or more in 14 consecutive games.

Sanders retired at 31, in his prime, calling it "the right time."

"When I think about the Hall of Fame, it seems like that's something that happens to someone else," Sanders said. "You think Dick Butkus, Walter Payton, names of that light. To be here, I truly feel, in some ways a little out of place."

Speaking about himself and Elway, he said: "They saw something that was unique in us, something they might not see on any old Sunday."

What was unique was that Elway and Sanders made the extraordinary look easy. *AP*


CAROLINA Panthers quarterback Jake Delhomme throws during the team's workout. REUTERS

US soldiers in Iraq watching Carolina-New England tussle

TIKRIT, Iraq—The Super Bowl parties for US troops in Iraq will start hours before dawn, and there won't be any beer. But at least in Tikrit, soldiers have a lavish venue: They'll be watching a cinema-sized screen in a former palace of Saddam Hussein.

At bases across the country, the 130,000 American troops will be able to catch the game between the Carolina Panthers and the New England Patriots live (starting at 2:25 a.m. Monday, Iraqi time) in mess halls and recreation centers.

If waking up in the middle of the chilly Iraqi night is too daunting, many bases will tape the game, which is being aired from Houston on the American Forces Radio and Television Service, and replay it later.

In Tikrit, Saddam's hometown and headquarters of the 4th Infantry Division, troops will watch the big game at the US Army recreation center—a three-story palace built by the ousted dictator, with chandeliers, mosaic floors, a sweeping staircase and a man-made lake.

"It's going to be a big party for the soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Celeste Proctor, in charge of arrangements for the event. "It brings a little bit of home to the place."

The Super Bowl provides a welcome distraction for the troops, many of them stationed in the dangerous Sunni Triangle north and west of Baghdad or in the capital itself—areas where vehicle bombings, roadside explosives, nighttime mortar fire and snipers present a constant challenge.

In Ramadi, a hotbed of anti-American resistance, paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division were setting up a wide-screen TV and speakers at their base, said Capt. Tammy Galloway. Americans in Baghdad can watch the game in a tent outside Saddam's former Presidential Palace, now the main headquarters of the US-led coalition. *AP*

Schumacher sets record in new Ferrari

FIORANO, Italy—World champion Michael Schumacher set a lap record Saturday in his new Ferrari car as he simulated a Grand Prix distance at the company circuit of Fiorano.

Schumacher turned his fastest lap, the 71st of 100 laps, in 56.279 seconds, improving on the circuit record of 56.338 set in a 2003-GA model last March.

The F2004 model, expected to make its debut in the opening Formula One championship race in Australia in March, was on its second day of tests at Fiorano after the official presentation at Maranello Monday.

"It was a good debut, with no problems," Schumacher said. "I'm somewhat happy."

"However, we must understand the car's efficiency as compared with the other teams. I must say that Williams and Renault new cars look very strong," Schumacher said.

Meanwhile, the Imola circuit, one of the fastest in Formula One racing and the home track of world champion Ferrari, will host its last Grand Prix this year as auto racing is heading East, F1 boss Bernie Ecclestone told Italian sports daily Gazzetta dello Sport. *AP*

Ethiopian rips 5,000m mark

ADERE AP

STUTTGART, Germany—Ethiopian Berhane Adere broke the indoor women's 5,000-meter world record Saturday by more than eight seconds at the Stuttgart international meet.

Adere, the 10,000 outdoor world champion, recorded a time of 14 minutes, 39.29 seconds, shattering Gabriela Szabo of Romania's record of 14:47.35 set in 1999.

"When I feel the power I push. I didn't know I was eight seconds ahead. When I push, I push for myself," Adere said.

Moses swims fastest 100m breaststroke, ups win streak

NEW YORK—Ed Moses laid down the gauntlet to his Olympic rivals after completing his World Cup campaign in style at the short-course event in New York on Saturday.

The American won the 100m breaststroke in 57.96—the fastest time in the world this year—to add to gold medals in the 50m breaststroke and 200m breaststroke on Friday, leaving him with 12 wins in his last 12 races.

"I'm preparing for the big dance," Moses said of this year's Olympic Games in Athens, where he is early favorite for three golds.

"I haven't had a run of form like this before. I've definitely been playing some mental games with my competitors recently and they know now I'm not messing around.

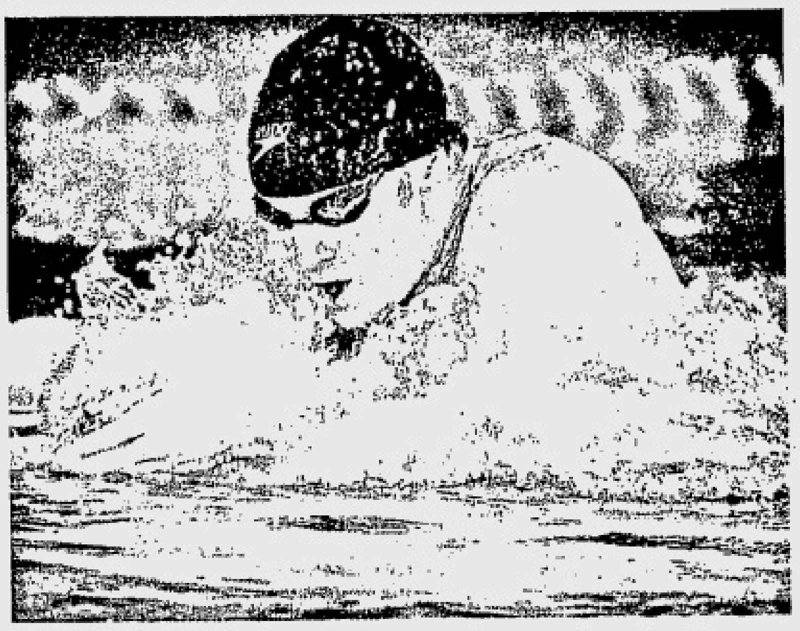
"To be honest with you, I reckon they might be a little scared."

The 23-year-old, who returns to university on Monday, will not swim at the eighth and final World Cup meet in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, next weekend.

But after his world record performance in the 200m breaststroke in Berlin earlier this month, he heads the World Cup standings and is line for a total payout of $74,250.

"All I know is that I'm going to be ready for Athens," Moses, who has said he is considering a change of career to professional golf after the Olympics, told AFP.

At the Sydney Olympics four years ago, Moses won silver in the 100m breaststroke and gold in the 400m medley relay. *AFP*


MOSES churns the 100-meter breaststroke. AP

ENTERTAINMENT

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

'Men in Black' rapped by Marvel Comics

LOS ANGELES—Comic book publisher Marvel Enterprises Inc. has filed a lawsuit against the movie arm of Sony Corp., claiming Sony used deceptive accounting tactics to deny Marvel royalties on merchandising related to the "Men in Black" series of films.

Marvel, which filed two suits against Sony divisions last year over the merchandising of the "Spider-Man" franchise, filed the new suit on Thursday last week in Los Angeles Superior Court against Sony Pictures Entertainment and Columbia Pictures.

The suit claims that Sony has breached a licensing agreement by failing to properly report revenue, especially for merchandising, showing in statements that the two "Men in Black" films have lost money despite hundreds of millions of dollars in box-office and ancillary sales.

A spokesperson for Sony Pictures and Columbia said they had not yet seen the suit and could not comment.

The suit, which claims breach of written contract and unfair business practices, seeks damages of at least $6 million, an accounting of the movies' earnings and an injunction against further unfair practices. *Reuters*

THE MEN in black (l-r): Will Smith, Tommy Lee Jones with Rip Torn

DJ Alvaro: From earnest folk singer to Sex Bomb-doppelganger

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

DJ Alvaro is now looking like a Sex Bomb dancer, a radically different image from the unglamorous Pinoy folk rocker persona she once sported.

In her debut 1995 album, "Bagong Babae," from which her first hit song, "Tipo Kong Lalake," was culled, DJ was pictured on the album hanging onto the back of a jeepney, with her guitar slung on her shoulder. That free-spiritedness reflected the unconventional, mostly female-empowering content of her lauded mid-'90s effort.

Today, one would not have thought that this hip-looking lady with the printed asymmetrical top, slightly exposed cleavage, and shades resting on her head, is the same earnest minstrel clad in plaid from the past.

"*Ngayon, parang* bold star *na* (Today, I look like a bold star)," she jokingly opines. "*Hindi*, actually, personal improvement *lang. Siyempre, gusto mo namang* presentable *ka, hindi mukhang siga-sigang lalaki, 'di ba* (Not really, merely a personal improvement. You'd want to look presentable and not like a tough guy, don't you)?"

Satisfying change

DJ admits this change has been a personally satisfying one: "I like it. It reflects my confidence. I'm not ashamed of my body. Before, I hid my body because I was skin and bones."

She revealed that her former image didn't really affect how her material was received. Her songs spoke for themselves.

"But how I looked before gave me an identity. Long-sleeved shirt, curly hair, no make-up. Androgynous," says DJ, who won the Katha award for best new artist in 1996.

According to the troubadour, her current album under Galaxy Records, "Medyo Bastos," isn't a drastic departure from "Bagong Babae" and her 1997 follow-up album, "Nenita." But she experimented with style. One of the eight pop tracks, "Papa Ka Ba?" for example, has DJ rapping: "It's the most effective musical style for that song. Song *ito for—sabi nila—mga baklang katulad ko*!

"There's still the naughtiness in the songs that are funny. Also, the punchlines have catchy *na* phrases," she enthuses.

In the past, DJ has expressed herself through songs as social commentary with pointed political messages, tackling topics like drug abuse ("Solb"), preservation of the environment ("Inang Kalikasan"), and even male prostitution ("Lino"). This Public Administration graduate from the University of the Philippines has written, sung and record-

DJ/ A32

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Charlize Theron's latest performance generates major Oscar buzz

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

NOT a few readers were surprised when we wrote in a recent column that **Charlize Theron's** performance in "Monster" was being touted as the probable winner of the best actress Oscar for 2003, even before the finalists were announced last Jan. 27.

The film had been released only in limited markets just to qualify it for consideration by Academy voters, so not many people have seen it. And yet, Theron's performance has generated major Oscar buzz, effectively upstaging similarly outstanding portrayals turned in by filmdom's best actresses.

What is it about Theron's work in "Monster" that has impressed viewers and potential Academy voters? It turns out that the movie's title refers to a female serial killer, Aileen Wuornos, who's a far cry from Theron's naturally lovely appearance.

It's this great transformation (or deterioration) that makes Theron's portrayal attention-calling. To vivify her character, the beautiful actress had to "uglify" herself, put on weight, and toughen up the way she moved and talked.

Wuornos was a prostitute who became such a man-hater that she murdered six of her tricks. Sexually abused as a child, she put up a sullen and abrasive exterior to hide the pain and torment she felt.

This complex duality posed a special thespic challenge to Theron, and critics' raves show that she fully measured up to the role's rigorous requirements.

Even before she got her Oscar nomination, Theron had already been cited by other film awards groups for her performance in "Monsters." The Oscars being the biggest movie competition there is, however, her victory in it would definitely cap a most outstanding season's run for the lovely star who's now bent on going beyond her beautiful exterior, and making a name for herself as one of the best actresses on the silver screen.

Feedback

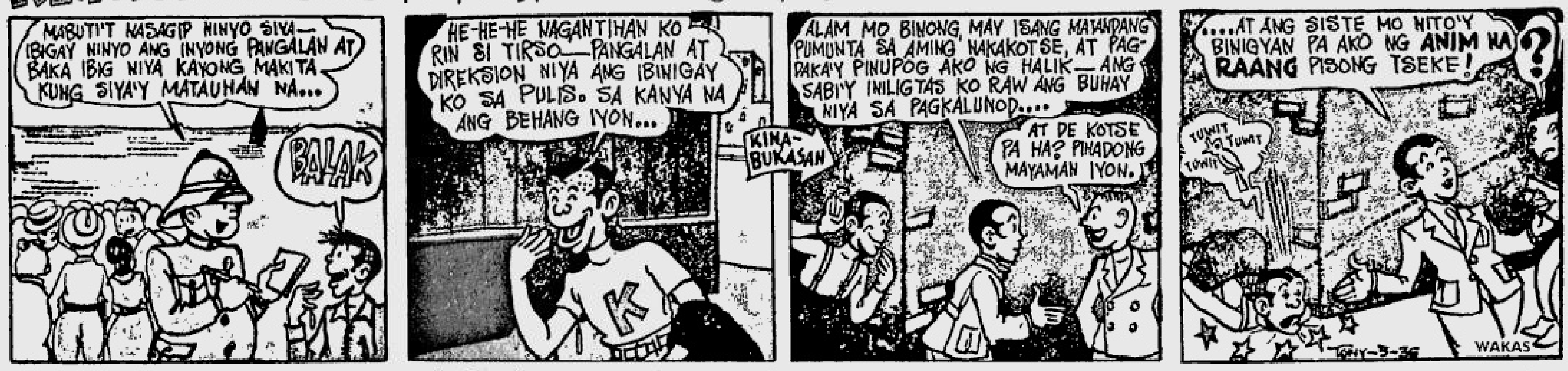
FROM **Elliott Anderson**, Ozamis City: "Regarding your 12/29 column, 'Kids Should Be Kids'—a great exposé of what I agree is an agonizing problem, not just in the Philippines.

"I would have added 'Be Allowed To' be-

CHARLIZE/ A30

KENKOY KLASIKS by Tony Velasquez celebrating 75 years

ALIWAN 1936 from the LOPEZ MUSEUM collection / Courtesy of KOMIKS CAFE / INQ EDITION 2.2.04



MABUTI'T NASAGIP NINYO SIYA—IBIGAY NINYO ANG INYONG PANGALAN AT BAKA IBIG NIYA KAYONG MAKITA KUNG SIYA'Y MATAUHAN NA...
BALAK
HE-HE-HE NAGANTIHAN KO RIN SI TIRSO—PANGALAN AT DIREKSION NIYA ANG IBINIGAY KO SA PULIS. SA KANYA NA ANG BEHANG IYON...
K
KINA-BUKASAN
ALAM MO BINONG, MAY ISANG MATANDANG PUMUNTA SA AMING NAKAKOTSE, AT PAGDAKA'Y PINUPOG AKO NG HALIK—ANG SABI'Y INILIGTAS KO RAW ANG BUHAY NIYA SA PAGKALUNOD....
AT DE KOTSE PA HA? PIHADONG MAYAMAN IYON.
....AT ANG SISTE MO NITO'Y BINIGYAN PA AKO NG ANIM NA RAANG PISONG TSEKE!
?
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7 LAST SAMURAI
8 STUCK ON YOU

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8 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS

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4 BROTHER BEAR

BICUTAN
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1 LAST SAMURAI
2 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
3 STUCK ON YOU
4 BROTHER BEAR

CITY MARILAO

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2 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
3 MEMENTO MORI
4 BROTHER BEAR

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3 LAST SAMURAI
4 HAUNTED OFFICE
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6 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
7 DIABLO
8 KILL BILL VOLUME 1
9 STUCK ON YOU
10 TWINS EFFECT

SOUTHMALL
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2 KILL BILL VOLUME 1
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 BROTHER BEAR
5 PURI
6 TWINS EFFECT
7 STUCK ON YOU
8 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
9 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
10 DIABLO

CITY FAIRVIEW
[illegible]

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2 PURI
3 SCARY MOVIE 3
4 LAST SAMURAI
5 STUCK ON YOU
6 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
7 BROTHER BEAR
8 KILL BILL VOLUME 1
9 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
10 LIBERATED
11 TWINS EFFECT
12 DIABLO

CITY DAVAO
[illegible]

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2 CABIN FEVER
3 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
4 THE GRUDGE
5 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
6 KILL BILL VOLUME 1

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3 LAST SAMURAI
4 BROTHER BEAR
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6 TWINS EFFECT
7 THE GATHERING
8 HAUNTED OFFICE
9 STUCK ON YOU
10 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
11 DIABLO
12 PURI

CINEMA TUTUBAN
[illegible]

1 LAST SAMURAI
2 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
3 DIABLO
4 STUCK ON YOU

CITY ILOILO
[illegible]

1 MYSTIC RIVER
2 RESERVED
3 LAST SAMURAI
4 INTOLERABLE CRUELTY
5 KILL BILL VOLUME 1
6 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
7 RESERVED
8 THE GRUDGE

CITY MANILA
[illegible]

1 STUCK ON YOU
2 LAST SAMURAI
3 HAUNTED OFFICE
4 BROTHER BEAR
5 KILL BILL VOLUME 1
6 LAST SAMURAI
7 TWINS EFFECT
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9 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
10 DIABLO
11 LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
12 MEMENTO MORI

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STUCK ON YOU 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50 DOLBY DIGITAL
THE LAST SAMURAI 10:15, 1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00 SDDS
THE GATHERING 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:55, 9:00
LOTR 3 10:20, 2:05, 5:55, 9:45 DOLBY
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KILL BILL 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:00 DOLBY
LORD OF THE RINGS RETURN OF THE KING 10:40, 2:20, 6:00, 10:00 DOLBY
BROTHER BEAR 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:40, 10:00
STUCK ON YOU 10:10, 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9:50 DOLBY
DIABLO 11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:00 SDDS
A TALE OF TWO SISTERS 11:30, 2:00, 4:30, 7:00, 9:40 DTS

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3 DIABLO DOLBY
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7 LORD OF THE RINGS THE RETURN OF THE KING DTS
8 THE LAST SAMURAI DOLBY

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3 BROTHER BEAR
4 LOTR 3
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5 DIABLO
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Charlize Theron's . . .

From page A29

tween 'Should' and 'Be,' because the truth is, the 'decision' for kids to imitate adults instead of playing with toys is made for children *by their parents* . . . The children, for their part, don't have a clue.

"From the adult songs they sing or dance to (or try not to), to the sexy 'grown-up' clothes they wear, so absurdly out of place on little bodies only a few years out of diapers. Scary.

"Like you, I'm for kids being 'permitted' to enjoy their childhood—an entitlement *nobody* has the right to foreclose—mercifully free of adult 'complications.'—Free from an adult world that, statistically speaking, will violate many of them sexually and in other life-wrecking ways before they're 30.

"It starts with the parents and goes from there, bottom line. Life's short. So, keep writing about the subject, because nobody does. *Do it for the children* because, let's face it, they don't know how (or even 'why').

'Electile Dysfunction'

SOME weeks ago, we had a roaring good time watching the political comedy revue "Electile Dysfunction" at Republic of Malate. On Feb. 3, 4 and 5, the hit show will be restaged at Music Museum—don't miss it!

Directed by **Leo Rialp**, "Electile Dysfunction" is a spoof of Filipino politicians, with particular focus on the "presidentiables." Zesty impersonations are turned in by a topnotch cast that includes **Noni Buencamino, Raul Montesa, Boboy Garrovillo** and **Joan Santos.**

'Agnoia'

PETA'S new production, "Agnoia," starts its run at the Dulaang Rajah Soliman on Feb. 5. The script by **Liza Magtoto** deals with family relationships.

Deep-seated issues and resentments are brought to the fore when the head of the family is diagnosed to be dying of cancer. Performances until Feb. 28; direction by **Melvin Lee.** Call 410-0822.

'Retro Love'

ROCK legend and Grammy nominee **John Ford Coley** performs at the Araneta Coliseum in "Retro Love" at 8:30 p.m. on Feb. 14.

In 1969, Coley teamed up with **England Dan** and the duo came up with its hits like "I'd really Like To See You Tonight," "It's Sad To Belong To Someone Else," "We'll Never Have To Say Goodbye Again" and "Love Is the Answer."

In 1980, the duo split up, and Coley went solo, sometimes collaborating with other artists. He has also written music for TV and the movies, in addition to composing songs for new artists. Call 911-5555 and 551-7777.

Incubus invades Manila

THE ROCK band Incubus will invade Manila on March 12 for a one-night performance at the PICC open field.

The band is currently on its 2004 World Tour—rocking South America, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Bangkok, Malaysia, Korea, Japan and the Philippines.

The 12-year-old band's new album, "A Crow Left of the Murder," will be out in record bars tomorrow. The CD features 14 new tracks, including the carrier single "Megalomaniac."

Tickets to the band's show, presented by Jag Jeans, are now on sale at all SM Ticketnet outlets. Call Ticketnet at 911-5555 or Icon Productions at 373-5734.

Araneta Center ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

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Ali 1	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
Ali 2	DIABLO
Ali 3	THE LAST SAMURAI
Ali 4	LORD OF THE RINGS 3
Ali 5	KILL BILL
Ali 6	STUCK ON YOU
Ali 7	BROTHER BEAR

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TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
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ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	BAKAT / DOUBLE SEDUCTION
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	SEX SCANDAL
B'	LORD OF THE RINGS
C	

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CINEMA-1	KILL BILL
CINEMA-2	PURI
CINEMA-3	MALIKMATA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	CAPTAIN BARBELL
CINEMA-6	MALIKMATA
CINEMA-7	MEMENTO MORI
CINEMA-8	TWINS EFFECT
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BROTHER BEAR
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STUCK ON YOU
CINEMA-12	LOTR 3: RETURN OF THE KING
CINEMA-14	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
CINEMA-15	DIABLO

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 3
CINEMA-1	KILL BILL
CINEMA-2	BANGKOK HAUNTED
CINEMA-4	CABIN FEVER

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2	THE LAST SAMURAI	12:20, 3:35, 6:50, 10:15	PG-13
3	BROTHER BEAR	11:45, 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45, 9:45	GP
4	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS	11:45, 2:15, 4:45, 7:15, 10:00	PG-13

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CINEMA 2	THE LAST SAMURAI	12:00, 3:20, 6:30, 9:50	P13

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KILL BILL R18 12:00, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50	BROTHER BEAR GP 11:40, 1:40, 3:40, 5:40, 7:40, 9:40	STUCK ON YOU PG13 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45, 10:20
LAST SAMURAI PG13 12:50, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS PG13 12:00, 2:10, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING PG13 2:05

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

Rekindle the embers of hope.

On Jan. 11, 2004, more than 25,000 people were left homeless due to a fire that razed the Baseco Compound in Tondo. Residents were moved to nine evacuation centers and now need food, clothes, medicine, vitamins, toiletries, mats, blankets, milk, feeding bottles and clean water. Relief assistance can be coursed through the Bayanihang Baseco campaign, one manifestation that Filipinos care and are heroes in their own way by helping others out of difficult times.

HOW TO HELP:

- For bulk donations -- DSWD-NCR, Director Alicia R. Bala, Ms. Domingo Godinez and Ms. Lorelie Suelo, 389 San Rafael Street, Quiapo, Manila or call 7348647-49 [illegible]
- For evacuees' daily needs -- Manila Dept. of Social Welfare, Dr. Jose M. Barranda, Manila City Hall, or call 5274910-5274949
- For perishable goods -- Barangay Office: Chairman Tess Lumactud, Barangay 649, Bagong Lupa, Baseco, or call 4041047
- McDonald's restaurants & Petron service stations in the NCR region will also serve as drop-off centers.

Bayanihang BASECO

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3RD WEEK

MTRCB PG-13

Hurry! Experience for the last time on the big screen the final episode of the highly-acclaimed and much-awarded LOTR trilogy.

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BEST PICTURE
BEST DIRECTOR–PETER JACKSON
BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY–FRAN WALSH & PHILIPPA BOYENS & PETER JACKSON
BEST ORIGINAL SCORE–HOWARD SHORE
BEST ORIGINAL SONG–"INTO THE WEST" PERFORMED BY ANNIE LENNOX

WINNER 4 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS
BEST PICTURE
BEST DIRECTOR–PETER JACKSON

~ WINNER ~	~ WINNER ~	~ WINNER ~	~ WINNER ~
BEST PICTURE Producers Guild of America New York Film Critics Circle Broadcast Film Critics Association Chicago Film Critics Association	BEST DIRECTOR PETER JACKSON Los Angeles Film Critics Association Broadcast Film Critics Association Chicago Film Critics Association	BEST ACTING BY AN ENSEMBLE National Board Of Review Broadcast Film Critics Association	BEST COMPOSER HOWARD SHORE Broadcast Film Critics Association Chicago Film Critics Association

Writers Guild Of America	Screen Actors Guild	Directors Guild Of America
NOMINEE - BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY FRAN WALSH & PHILIPPA BOYENS & PETER JACKSON	NOMINEE OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE BY A CAST	NOMINEE BEST DIRECTOR - PETER JACKSON

"THE CINEMATIC EPIC OF OUR TIME, THE ONE BY WHICH ALL OTHERS WILL BE JUDGED."
-Kenneth Turan, LOS ANGELES TIMES

WOOD
McKELLEN
TYLER
MORTENSEN
ASTIN
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE RETURN OF THE KING

ALL DIGITAL SOUND AYALA CINEMAS PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THE LAST SAMURAI	1 BROTHER BEAR	ArtFilm 1 ISRAELI FILM FESTIVAL	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 1 STUCK ON YOU 1 20 3 50 6 20 8 50 11 20	THX 1 THE LAST SAMURAI
2 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS	2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS 3	2 CALENDAR GIRLS 12 30 2 45 5 00 7 15 9 30	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 2 THE LAST SAMURAI 2 00 5 10 8 20 11 30	2 BROTHER BEAR
3 DIABLO	GUARANTEED SEATS THX 3 THE LAST SAMURAI 1 00 4 10 7 20 10 30	Onstage REPERTORY'S FAME Jan. 31, Feb. 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29, Mar 6 & 7	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 SEABISCUIT 3 30 6 40 8 50 11 30	3 STUCK ON YOU
4 STUCK ON YOU	4 SEABISCUIT		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 BROTHER BEAR 2 20 4 15 6 10 8 05 10 00	4 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
	5 A TALE OF TWO SISTERS		GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE LORD OF THE RINGS 3 [illegible]	5 THE LORD OF THE RINGS 3
	6 STUCK ON YOU			
	7 KILL BILL			

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Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.

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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	STUCK ON YOU
2 (SDDS)	A TALE OF TWO SISTER
3 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
4 GOLD (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	STUCK ON YOU
6 GOLD (SDDS)	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	BROTHER BEAR
8 [illegible]	DIABLO
9 [illegible]	KILL BILL
10 [illegible]	BROTHER BEAR

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	STUCK ON YOU
2 (DOLBY)	LAST SAMURAI
3 (DOLBY)	BROTHER BEAR
4 (DOLBY)	A TALE OF TWO SISTER

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 833.3274

1	PURI
2	BROTHER BEAR
3	LAST SAMURAI

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	BROTHER BEAR
2	STUCK ON YOU
	DIABLO
3	LAST SAMURAI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	PURI
5	

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	PURI
2	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
3	LAST SAMURAI
4	DIABLO
5	STUCK ON YOU
6	BROTHER BEAR

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
2	BRIDAL SHOWER

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
2	HOME COMING

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1	KING RAT
2	WILD BUTTERFLY
3	
4	

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

5	RESERVE
6	
7 (DTS)	
8 (SDDS)	
9 (DOLBY)	

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	PURI
2	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
3	TWIN EFFECTS
4 (SDDS)	DIABLO
5	STUCK ON YOU
6 (DOLBY)	BROTHER BEAR
7 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
8	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
9	MAPUSOK

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1	RESERVE
2 (SDDS)	
3 (DTS)	
4 (DOLBY)	
5	

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1	STUCK ON YOU
2	BROTHER BEAR
3 (DTS)	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
4	MAPUSOK
5 (SDDS)	LAST SAMURAI

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson	INTERNET QUEEN
Lords	INTERNET QUEEN

MARKET! MARKET! Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	LAST SAMURAI
2	STUCK ON YOU
3	MAPUSOK
4	BROTHER BEAR

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY)	LAST SAMURAI
2	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
3	BROTHER BEAR
4	STUCK ON YOU
5	MAPUSOK

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	LAST SAMURAI
2	BRIDAL SHOWER

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta Center
Ali MALL CINEPLEX 7
Tel No. 911-3101 Loc. [illegible]

1	A TALE OF TWO SISTERS
2	DIABLO
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LAST SAMURAI
4 (SDDS)	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING
5 (DTS)	KILL BILL
6	STUCK ON YOU
7	BROTHER BEAR

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	LAST SAMURAI
2	BROTHER BEAR
3 (DTS EX)	KILL BILL
4	LOST ISLAND

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	LAST SAMURAI
2	BROTHER BEAR
3 (DOLBY)	KILL BILL
4 (DTS)	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	THE GRUDGE
2	LOST ISLAND
3 (DOLBY)	BUFALLO SOLDIER
4 (DTS)	DOBLE SEDUCTION

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	STUCK ON YOU
2	MAPUSOK
3 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	BROTHER BEAR
2 (DTS)	STUCK ON YOU
3 (DOLBY)	LAST SAMURAI
4	SKY OF LOVE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	STUCK ON YOU
2 (DOLBY)	BROTHER BEAR
3 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
4	THE GATHERING

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	BRIDALSHOWER
2	SCARY MOVIE
3 (DOLBY)	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	GOOD BOY
2	KILL BILL
3 (DOLBY)	LOTR: RETURN OF THEE KING
4 (DTS)	LOST ISLAND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-3320

1	LOTR: RETURN OF THEE KING
2	LAST SAMURAI
3	BROTHER BEAR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	ALIPIN
2	GAWIN SA DILIM
3	MAPUSOK
4 (DTS)	SKY OF LOVE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	STUCK ON YOU
2	MAPUSOK
3 (DTS)	LAST SAMURAI
4	SKY OF LOVE
5	BROTHER BEAR

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1	STUCK ON YOU
2	MAPANUKSO

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1	LAST SAMURAI
2	STUCK ON YOU
3	MAPANUKSO

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	LOTR: RETURN OF THEE KING
2	KILL BILL
3 (DTS)	BANGKOK HAUNTED
4 (DOLBY)	TRAIN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8914

1 (DTS)	RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	AMERICAN PSYCHO
2	LOST ISLAND
3	MYSTICK RIVER
4	LOTR: RETURN OF THE KING

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1	DOBLE SEDUCTION
2	STAR RUNNER

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel 85035-71 to 72
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

THE TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
NOW SHOWING

DJ Alvaro . . .

From page A29

ed a number of original tracks, all of them possessing Filipino lyrics.

"When I create songs, I don't really take into consideration if it's political. That's already embedded in me and would come out automatically in my songs," she claims.

DJ has worked with some of her major musical influences, such as Joey Ayala and Gary Granada, in live performances since the previous decade. She hopes to collaborate with Rivermaya's Rico Blanco and ex-Eraserhead Ely Buendia. She also confesses that she has yet to top the success of her breakout ditty (which won an Awit award for best folk pop recording in 1996). But she hopes her re-emergence in the music scene will once again offer an inspiring alternative to listeners, regardless of gender.

"I feel women have very passive roles in society. I have experienced being active and assertive toward men. But I don't really put into my songs empowerment of women literally, like 'Wow, women power!' I don't want it that way. I treat it with a personal touch. Anybody could relate. It's not too abstract, but (it explores) more concrete messages."

The Indigo Girls, Joan Baez, Janis Joplin, Madonna, and Norah Jones are some of her favored strong, independent women artists.

"I learn from everyone and, at the same time, I bring out what I want. Songs are a part of your personal experience and of other people's experience. I am merely the instrument," DJ says.

Eight years in the business has taught her valuable things about her chosen profession and craft: "You need to compromise in the sense that you should meet people halfway. I don't have to compromise in what I believe in. But I also learned to interact. It's not just singing and singing. I needed to get along, too."

The straight-talking unattached singer describes her type of man as "*maginoo, pero medyo bastos* (gentlemanly but rough)."

"Still the same," she says. "It's not the physical aspects, *eh*. It's what's between the ears, and what's between the legs—*ay, hindi!*" she adds jokingly.

Her face looking serious, she continues, "He should make sense." That is always important: substance over style, she said.

DJ's ideal guy will also have to be attune with her sensitivity and sense of independence, and her frankness, all traits of the Cancer-born person.

"I'm more confident now. I don't want to be identified with starlets who are only gazed upon."

SHOW TIME

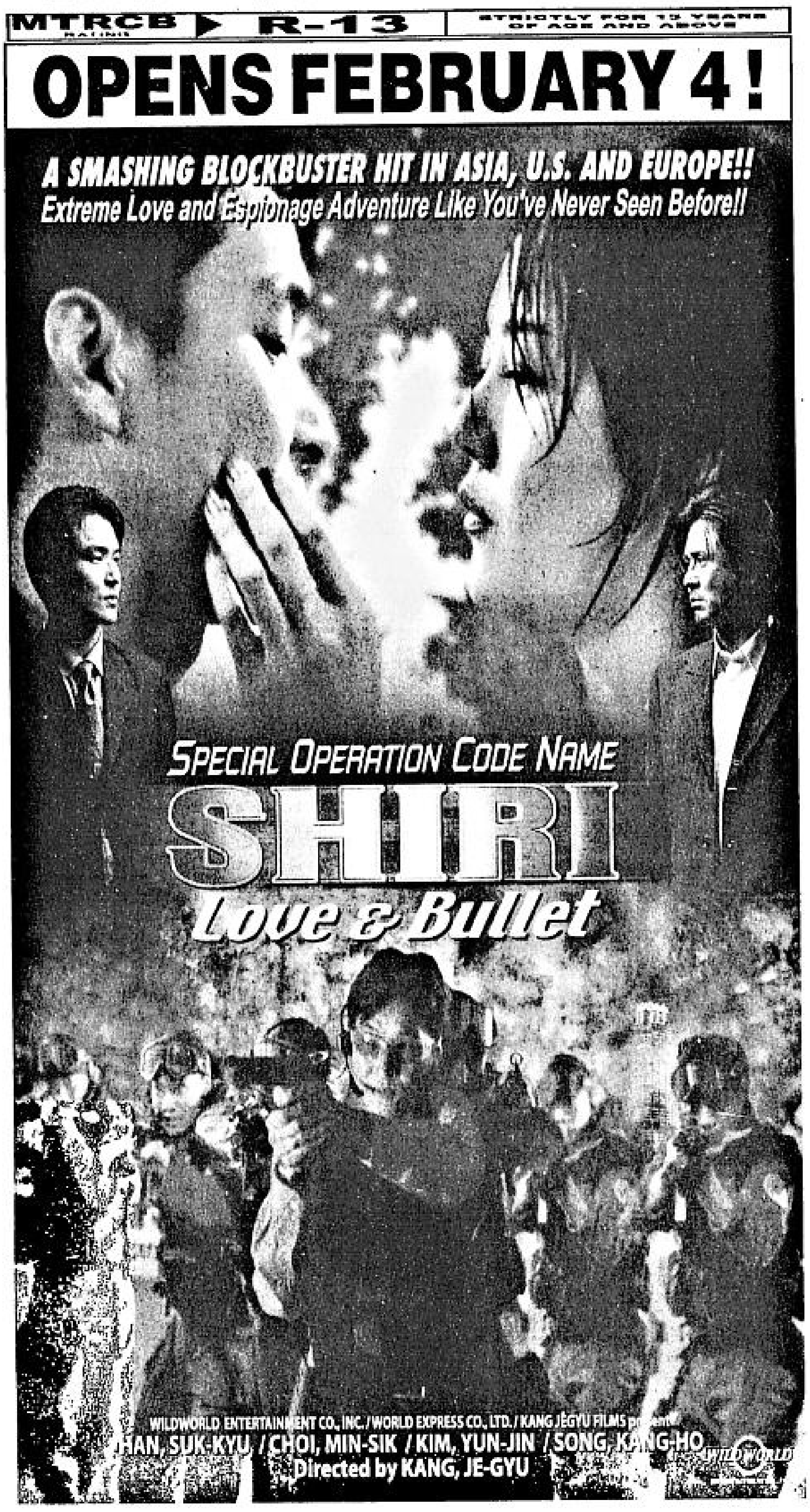
Paolo Santos at Dusit

ACOUSTIC artist Paolo Santos will tug at the heart strings of audiences in a pre-Valentine show on Feb. 7 at 8 p.m. at the Fiesta San Miguel at Dusit Hotel Nikko.

Guest is Aliya Parcs.

Paolo will sing popular songs like "Moonlight over Paris," "Close" and "Overjoyed."

Tickets are at P500 per person, inclusive of one standard drink (beer, sodas, tequila, vodka or scotch). The show is produced by MZ Entertainment. For queries, call Fiesta San Miguel at 867-3333 local 3308 or MZ Entertainment at 900-1627.


MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
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Love & Bullet
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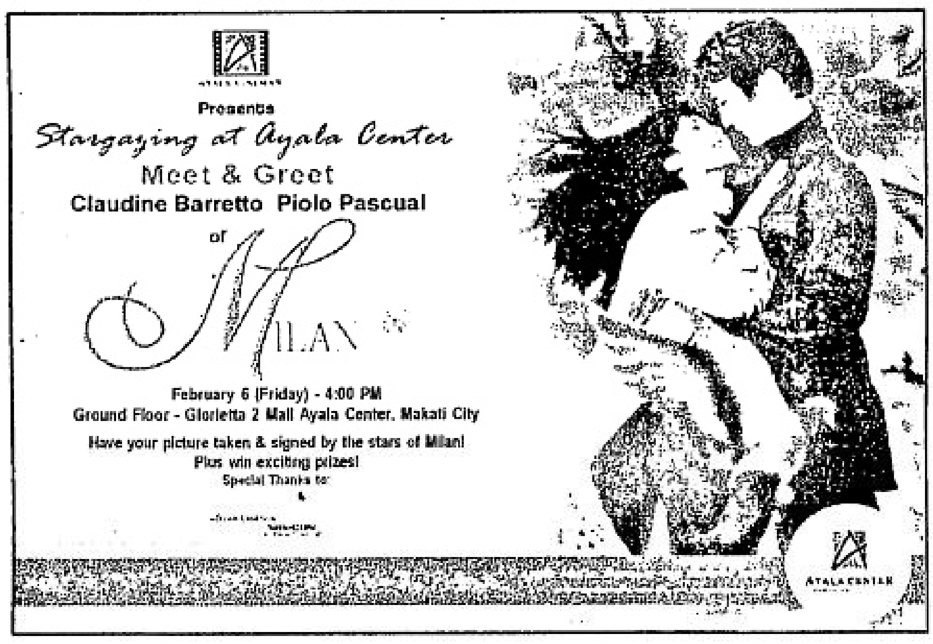
HAN, SUK-KYU / CHOI, MIN-SIK / KIM, YUN-JIN / SONG, KANG-HO
Directed by KANG, JE-GYU
WILDWORLD

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
In a world that told them how to think she showed them how to live
julia roberts
mona lisa smile
Julia Roberts dazzles in 'Mona Lisa Smile'
Ladies, give yourselves a special treat, and bring your sisters, classmates, girlfriends, Mom, or even a date, to see Julia's new movie.
Academy Award®-winner Julia Roberts heads a powerhouse cast with today's hot young Hollywood actresses - Kirsten Dunst (*Spider-Man*) and Julia Stiles (*Save the Last Dance, 10 Things I Hate About You*) - in an uplifting, heart-wrenching, and often-times funny drama.
Julia Roberts stars as Katherine, a teacher who challenges her bright female students, and discovers herself along the way.
Mike Newell, director of romantic comedy *Four Weddings & a Funeral*, megs a must-see movie to capture your heart and put a smile on your face.
Warming hearts at a theatre near you
FEBRUARY 4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Meet & Greet
Claudine Barretto Piolo Pascual
of
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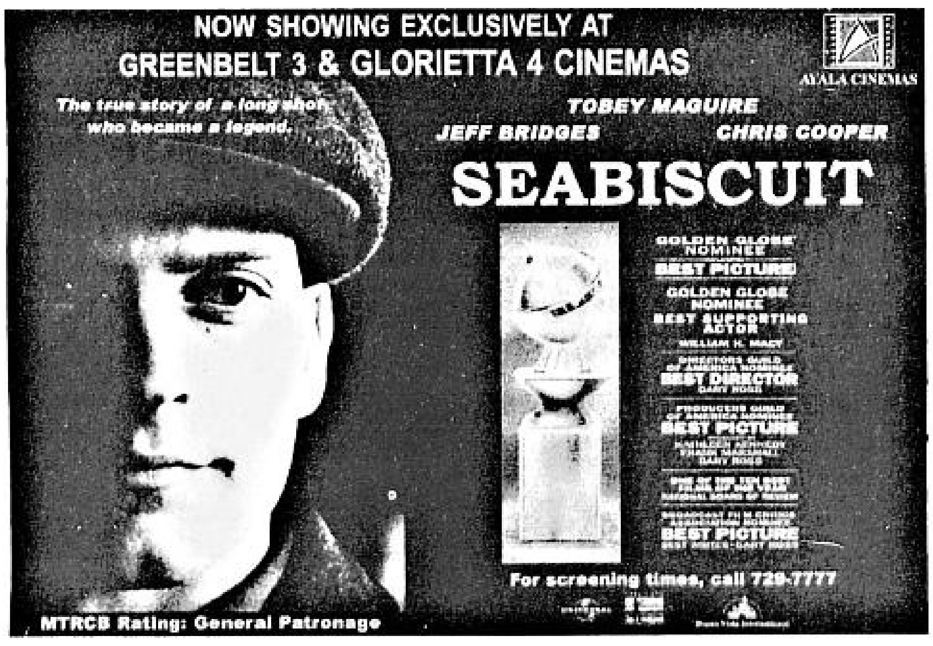
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AYALA CINEMAS
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JEFF BRIDGES CHRIS COOPER
SEABISCUIT
GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINEE BEST PICTURE
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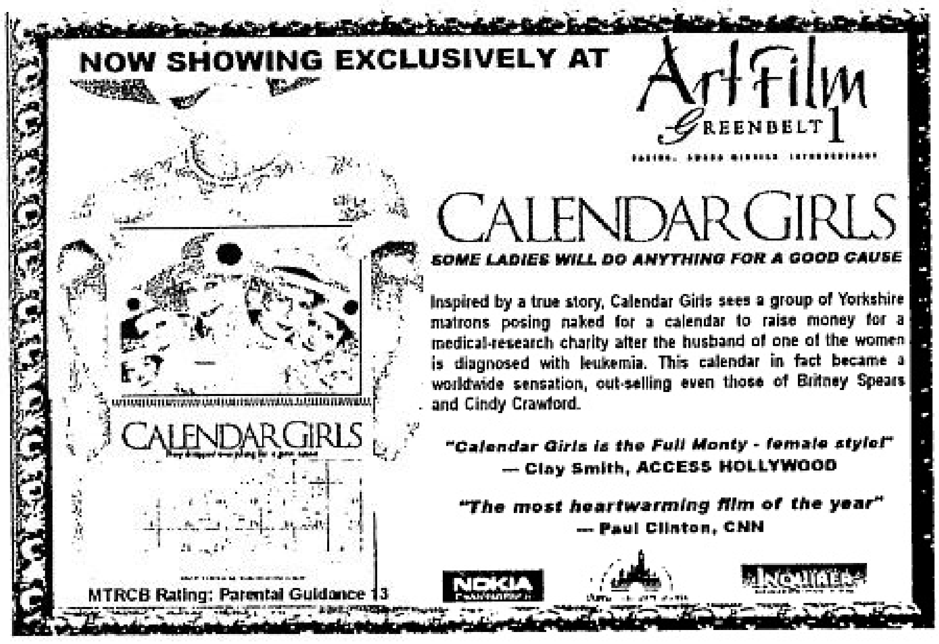
DIRECTORS GUILD OF AMERICA NOMINEE BEST DIRECTOR GARY ROSS
PRODUCERS GUILD OF AMERICA NOMINEE BEST PICTURE
BEST PICTURE
For screening times, call 729-7777
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage

NOW SHOWING
MTRCB ▶ R-18
Kaya mo bang labanan si satanas?
From Julio Fernandez, the king of horror comes the most terrifying movie from Spain
EVIL RISES FROM THE DEPTHS OF HELL.
DIABLO
FILMAX PRESENTS "DIABLO" MARK FROST ISABEL BROOK JEFFREY COMBS
PRODUCED BY JULIO FERNANDEZ DIRECTED BY BRIAN YUZNA

OPENS FEBRUARY 4
Based on the bestselling novel by SUSANNA MOORE
"An erotic thriller capable of inducing nightmares and guaranteed to shock even hard boiled audiences."
-The Miami Herald
A serial killer who cannot be caught.
A woman who knows too much.
A detective who hides a secret.
MEG RYAN MARK RUFFALO
KEVIN BACON
JENNIFER JASON LEIGH
IN THE CUT
A film by Jane Campion
MAGIC 89.9


NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT
Art Film GREENBELT 1
CALENDAR GIRLS
SOME LADIES WILL DO ANYTHING FOR A GOOD CAUSE
Inspired by a true story, Calendar Girls sees a group of Yorkshire matrons posing naked for a calendar to raise money for a medical-research charity after the husband of one of the women is diagnosed with leukemia. This calendar in fact became a worldwide sensation, out-selling even those of Britney Spears and Cindy Crawford.
"Calendar Girls is the Full Monty - female style!"
— Clay Smith, ACCESS HOLLYWOOD
"The most heartwarming film of the year"
— Paul Clinton, CNN
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
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Gov't warns currency speculators

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has warned that banks found repeatedly violating foreign exchange rules would be stripped of their licenses to trade currencies and their officers suspended.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said the Board had instructed the monetary agency to strictly impose fines and administrative sanctions on banks found violating foreign exchange rules repeatedly.

The fresh order to intensify the monitoring of foreign exchange deals and to strictly impose penalties came after the peso fell to a new historic low of 56.22 to $1 although it closed at 56.01 on Jan. 29.

"For instance, (for) those found guilty of splitting and have repeatedly committed the offense, the Board told us to strictly penalize and impose monetary as well as non-monetary sanctions," Reyes said.

Banks split their dollar purchases, especially when these have no accompanying documents, to circumvent a BSP order requiring financial institutions to fully document transactions worth $5,000 and above.

"We could suspend bank officers and directors. We could also suspend their foreign exchange licenses. There are many administrative sanctions we could impose," according to BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

But so far, the central bank officials said they have not seen any evidence of speculation among banks although transactions were being keenly monitored.

Last Friday, the peso recovered and closed at 55.98 to a dollar, but traders said it was a temporary respite. This week, the local currency would continue to test the 56.20:$1 level.

"Legitimate purchases are not counted as speculation. But transactions have to be accompanied by legitimate documentation. The BSP also continues to provide a hedging mechanism for big importers like oil companies and others," Buenaventura said.

A private bank trader said foreign investors have been buying back the dollars they sold early this year on account of political jitters.

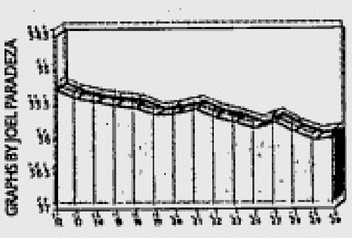
Supporting this observation was the 10- to 12-centavo premium that offshore investors pay just to buy back the dollars they sold earlier. In effect, these investors were buying dollars at P56.10 each.

Foreign investors placed their bets on the peso at the start of the year and sold about $300 million so they could invest in local stocks and securities. A trader said these investors still have to buy back about $200 million.

GOV'T/B6

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 55.98 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 30, 2004

¥ 105.88 = $ 1

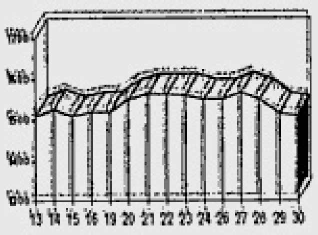
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 30, 2004

GOLD: $400.80-401.30

February 30, 2004

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.805672	1.000000	56.085000
Japan	Yen	0.007604	0.009438	0.529300
United Kingdom	Pound	1.463342	1.816300	101.867200
Hongkong	Dollar	0.103631	0.128627	7.214000
Switzerland	Franc	0.639879	0.794216	44.543700
Canada	Dollar	0.606224	0.752445	42.200900
Singapore	Dollar	0.472951	0.587027	32.923400
Australia	Dollar	0.612865	0.760688	42.663200
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.137175	2.652661	148.774500
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.214846	0.266667	14.956000
Brunei	Dollar	0.471567	0.585309	32.827100
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000096	0.000119	0.006700
Thailand	Baht	0.020537	0.025491	1.429700
UAE	Dirham	0.219355	0.272264	15.269900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.241200	69.612700
Argentina	Peso	0.273220	0.339121	19.019600
Brazil	Real	0.272187	0.337838	18.947600
Denmark	Kroner	0.134248	0.166628	9.345300
India	Rupee	0.017809	0.022104	1.239700
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212047	0.263193	14.761200
Mexico	New Peso	0.072502	0.089989	5.047000
New Zealand	Dollar	0.538012	0.667780	37.452400
Norway	Kroner	0.114233	0.141786	7.952100
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014088	0.017486	0.980700
South Africa	Rand	0.114042	0.141549	7.938800
Korea	Won	0.000687	0.000853	0.047800
Sweden	Kroner	0.109134	0.135457	7.597100
Syria	Pound	0.015644	0.019417	1.089000
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024216	0.030057	1.685700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000505	0.000627	0.035200

Stocks seen to weaken



(See stock market report on Page B2)

LOCAL stocks are likely to trade in a tight range this week with bias on the downside due to renewed peso-dollar exchange rate volatility and fresh jitters on the military front.

But dealers said the release of yearend corporate results, which were expected to be generally favorable, might open up opportunities for bargain-hunters.

The main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index lost 51.72 points or 3.32 percent to a two-week low of 1,508.30.

"I think the market will still trade a bit sideways, with some more room to correct (downward)," said Summit Securities president Harry Liu.

Liu said the market would hopefully consolidate within the 1,480-1,500 support level.

"The correction is welcome because the market has been strong in recent weeks and last week there was an excuse to correct because of the

STOCKS/B6

Local firms to tap chicken export market

By Christine A. Gaylican

RFM Corp.'s subsidiary Swift Foods Inc. will export for the first time its dressed chicken products to Japan and other Southeast Asian countries now plagued with the Avian flu virus and with a limited supply of poultry products.

As big-time exporter Thailand faces a ban from shipping its poultry products to other countries due to the bird flu scare, Philippine companies like Swift Foods are looking at the huge export market.

RFM chair Jose "JoeCon" Concepcion Sr. told the INQUIRER that the company was targeting to corner a portion of the $350-million market being supplied by Thailand.

"We would want to at least supply Japan and see to it that we maintain this market share and be side by side with Thailand when the avian flu crisis is over," Concepcion said in a phone interview.

He noted that the company's chicken dressing plant in Misamis Oriental was geared for the export market and if placed into full capacity could actually produce 100,000 pieces of dressed chicken a day.

"We could ship not less than 25 metric tons of chicken a day depending on the requirements of our customer," he said.

Other Philippine companies venturing in broiler integration and poultry raising such as San Miguel Corp., Tyson Agro-Ventures Inc., Universal Robina Corp. and Vitarich Corp. have exported their produce to Japan last year.

Danding joins TonyBoy in ABC-5 acquisition

By Doris C. Dumlao

BUSINESS magnate Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. has joined the consortium led by his nephew Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco as a silent partner in Associated Broadcasting Co.

INQUIRER sources privy to the P4.8-billion takeover deal said the elder Cojuangco, who chairs food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., was part of a triumvirate that was providing the financial muscle to ABC-5.

ABC-5 is still in the process of raising fresh capital to better compete with giants ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. and GMA Network Inc.

There are three holding companies which now control ABC-5, one source said.

The other investing group, aside from Tonyboy himself, is a holding company called DM Archers whose beneficial owner is banker Raul de Mesa, president of Bank of Commerce where the former is likewise the single biggest shareholder.

DM Archers, which was incorporated as a holding company for De Mesa's personal investment in ABC-5, owns 32 percent of the consortium, the source noted.

The remaining 68 percent is owned by the Cojuangcos, other sources added.

Danding had taken an equity position on a personal capacity but sources declined to say the exact size of his ownership.

ABC-5 sources said the new consortium recently raised P200 million in fresh equity and another P400 million was expected to come in before Feb. 15.

The fresh funds will be used to beef up ABC-5's content programming to challenge the two leading broadcasting firms.

DANDING Cojuangco PDI FILE PHOTO

Other sources said that while the consortium acquired ABC-5 for a total consideration of P4.8 billion, only a small percentage of the amount went as cash payment to the selling party, the group of veteran broadcaster Edward Tan. The rest of the amount represented assumed liabilities and payments for fixed assets.

The buyout deal was closed in late October last year after several months of negotiations.

The new owners of ABC-5 vowed to woo the middle class back to free television and give ABS-CBN and GMA-7 a "run for their money." A consortium of banks is now finalizing a financial package that will be disbursed to reposition ABC-5 as a "strong third" in the broadcasting industry by next year.

Initially, more than P1 billion would be spent for capital expenditures, the younger Cojuangco earlier said.

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PESO WEAKNESS

Treasury bill rates seen rising

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Two weeks ago, the 91-day rate slid by 8.6 basis points to 6.16 percent. *Clarissa S. Batino*

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Cielito F. Habito

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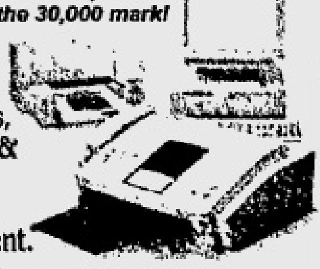

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APL APPOINTS NEW PHILIPPINE COUNTRY MANAGER

SINGAPORE January 30, 2004 - Leading global container transportation company APL has appointed a new Managing Director for its Philippine operations.

From February 2004, Maurice McKeating will oversee all aspects of APL's business in the Philippines from the company's regional headquarters in Manila.

Mr McKeating was most recently Country Manager for APL in Sri Lanka. Since joining APL's parent company, Singapore-based Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) as a graduate trainee in 1990, Mr McKeating has filled various positions, including two years with APL's Intra-Asia services team. He also spent three years in senior sales and marketing roles in Bangladesh, before his promotion to lead APL's Sri Lankan operation.

APL President for Asia and the Middle East, Brian Lutt, said, "Maurice's excellent track record of managing our operations in important emerging markets is good news for our Philippine operations and our customers here. With the support of his talented and capable team, I'm certain Maurice will take our business in the Philippines to the next level."
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SINGAPORE January 30, 2004 - Leading global container transportation company APL has appointed a new Managing Director for its Philippine operations.

From February 2004, Maurice McKeating will oversee all aspects of APL's business in the Philippines from the company's regional headquarters in Manila.

Mr McKeating was most recently Country Manager for APL in Sri Lanka. Since joining APL's parent company, Singapore-based Neptune Orient Lines (NOL) as a graduate trainee in 1990, Mr McKeating has filled various positions, including two years with APL's Intra-Asia services team. He also spent three years in senior sales and marketing roles in Bangladesh, before his promotion to lead APL's Sri Lankan operation.

APL President for Asia and the Middle East, Brian Lutt, said, "Maurice's excellent track record of managing our operations in important emerging markets is good news for our Philippine operations and our customers here. With the support of his talented and capable team, I'm certain Maurice will take our business in the Philippines to the next level."

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New opium of the masses

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

NOT so long ago, people resorted to bribing telephone linemen just to get even a temporary, illegal, static-ridden connection.

Now, it is the phone companies themselves who are paying the public just so they would sign up for the service.

It cost Globe, for instance, P9,834 for every postpaid subscriber it signed up last year, considerably much higher than the P3,396 average cost per new customer in 2002. Of the 2003 cost outlay, 94 percent went to handset and SIM card subsidy, with the balance going to promotional expenses.

For the lower prepaid market, Globe last year spent P291 for every new subscriber, with 58 percent of that going into handset subsidy, as against the P225 it shouldered in 2002.

Smart's handset subsidy would even be higher, Globe president Gerardo Ablaza Jr. told an analysts briefing Friday, although he did not identify the competition by name.

Ablaza admitted that the cost of the handset subsidy has been "staggering," considering that Globe added 166,126 postpaid and 1,472,513 prepaid subscribers last year. And those figures do not include Globe's other mobile service, Touch Mobile, which saw its subscriber base soar by 649,059.

(The other side of the equation is that Globe grossed an average of P1,637/month/postpaid unit and P512/month/prepaid unit last year. All those yakking and texting racheted Globe's 2003 net income to about P10.3 billion, nearly 50-percent higher than the previous year's despite the difficult environment.)

Although the Globe CEO said he would prefer the billions spent on handset subsidy be spent in, say, more cell sites, that is not likely to happen given the take-no-prisoners mood of the players and market-buying strategy of the new entrant, Sun.

Even Piltel president Greg Atienza is pleasantly surprised at the strength of the low-end market that his company has been relegated to, with millions of "students, drivers, and maids" now also being looped into what up to the pre-Ramos deregulation years used to be an exclusive circle of subscribers.

High school and college students scrimp on their "baon" just so they can have money for reloads, Atienza noted. Whereas the child of the '60s and the '70s

COCKTALES/B4

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Ateneo de Manila University
John Gokongwei School of Management
Breaking Barriers:
Filipino Brands Preparing to Conquer Global Markets

Inter Continental Manila Ballroom
February 17, 2004 Tuesday 8am-5pm
READY TO GO GLOBAL?
The 4th session of the Business Leadership Forum has arrived. "Breaking Barriers: Filipino Brands Preparing to Conquer Global Markets" showcases Filipino brands that are on their way to becoming international brand successes. They are the few who are braving international waters to try and accomplish every local brand's dream --- to break into the global scene.
They will share their stories and secrets, and let you in on the formulas for giving a brand an international foothold. Listen and gain important advice so that you, too, can break international barriers on your own.

Mr. J. Richard Soriano
President & Founder, BCD Pinpoint Direct Marketing Inc.; Chairman, OgilvyOne Philippines; Professorial Lecturer, John Gokongwei School of Management, Ateneo de Manila University.
After winning a host of international advertising and direct marketing awards with BCD Pinpoint Direct Marketing Inc., Dickie discusses some of the fundamentals in establishing an international reputation for your brand. Listen as he imparts theories and cases from practice that can give you inspiration and valuable insights as you try to give your brand international exposure.

Ms. Ann T. Pamintuan
Designer and Member, Movement 8; President & CEO, The Gilded Expressions.
Just what does it take to give Filipino furniture designs an international name and recognition? Movement 8, a group of the country's most celebrated furniture designers, has set the ball rolling for Filipino designs internationally, winning praises from Shanghai and Frankfurt. Sitting pretty on top of the furniture export industry, Filipino design guru Ann shares some important tips and guidelines on making products that are true to the taste of international markets.

Mr. Jonathan Jay Aldeguer
President, Island Souvenirs, Inc.
A little island-inspired creation that has become one of the trademarks of Philippine tourism, Islands Souvenirs is gaining an international following in its Singapore, San Francisco, Guam, and Okinawa branches. Find out what propelled the company into the international limelight as Jay shares the highs, lows, and the challenges of internationally marketing his brand.

Mr. Jose Pedro C. Recio
Senior Partner, Recio+Casas Architects.
With Shanghai's Pu' xi, Bangkok's Pacific City Club, and other major projects in Metro Manila tucked under its belt, Manila-based architectural firm Recio+Casas has carved its righteous place in the upper stories of the architectural field. Senior partner Jose shares some tips and tricks on making a name for your company, whether in the Philippines or overseas.

Mr. Arthur R. Tan
President & CEO, Integrated Microelectronics Inc.
Integrated Microelectronics Inc. (IMI) provides electronics manufacturing solutions for some of the world's largest original equipment manufacturers. With over 20 years experience in offering comprehensive manufacturing solutions for its international clients, and after receiving a host of awards for manufacturing quality, IMI has become one of the most sought-after design/R&D companies from the Philippines, battling it out in an industry dominated by Western companies. President and COO Arthur talks you through the various challenges in the company's transformation and what it took to gain international recognition.

Mr. Benel D. Lagua
President & COO, Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation
The Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation was set up to source and adopt development initiatives to help create globally-competitive small and medium enterprises. Benel will discuss how private enterprises can enlist the help of this government agency not just in the area of finance, but also in technology, production, management, and business linkages in order to prepare for international markets.
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Coffee output up 21.7%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S coffee production grew 21.7 percent during the 2003-2004 cropping season, giving high hopes that the Philippines is on track to meeting its goal of becoming self-sufficient in coffee in 10 years.

According to the National Coffee Development Board (NCDB), coffee production in the last cropping season reached 28,000 tons, up from the previous season's 23,000 tons.

A crop season for coffee begins in February and ends in January of the following year.

"We have a fighting target of becoming self-sufficient in coffee in 10 years, but we are trying to accelerate growth to beat the target," said an official of the NCDB.

NCDB said the production growth was partly attributed to the technical assistance provided by the government and the private sector to coffee farmers.

The group added that the increase in coffee production was also due to increased credit access for coffee farmers. NCDB has tapped agencies to provide financing to coffee farmers.

Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corp. last year provided P300 million for the country's coffee production development program, said NCDB.

NCDB said one way to meet the target was to tap larger farm areas for the crop.

The Philippines consumes about 55,000 tons of coffee per cropping season. This means the country still depends on imports for the other half of its coffee requirement. About P1.3 billion is spent yearly for coffee importation.

NCDB said coffee farm owners were being encouraged to establish more nurseries to increase supply of coffee seedlings.

"The fastest growing coffee seedling takes about 18 months to mature, while regular coffee takes about three years," said the NCDB official.

NCDB is a private sector-led group tasked by Malacañang to spearhead efforts to bring back luster to the country's coffee industry.

The coffee industry used to be one of the country's major dollar earners. Until 1986, the Philippines was earning at least $150 million per year from coffee exports.

NCDB said the country's coffee industry, if developed, could be a lucrative revenue source because of the improving price of coffee worldwide. It said that from about P32 per kilo last year, worldwide price for coffee now stands at about P44.

After the Philippines realizes its long-term goal of self-sufficiency in coffee, the country will be groomed to become one of the biggest coffee exporters like Vietnam and Brazil, said the NCDB.

Let's boycott chicken!

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

SMUGGLERS used to limit their nefarious activities to small packages of blue-seal cigarettes, Swiss watches, Scotch whiskey and Spanish brandy. This petty smuggling still goes on. But now, the big-ticket item for smugglers is—chicken parts in a shipload of 40-foot containers.

Isn't this absolutely ridiculous? There are classical novels on smugglers, but can you imagine Robert Louis Stevenson writing about chicken parts smugglers?

Contraband goods were usually unloaded beyond Philippine territorial waters or at some isolated cove or abandoned airstrip. Now, the 40-foot containers have to be landed right at our major ports.

What is going on? Chicken smuggling can be traced directly to the 40-percent tax on imports. A high import tax is a surefire invitation to smuggling. The higher the tax, the more smuggling there will be. Conversely, the lower the tax, the less the smuggling.

The chicken-raising cartel lobbied for the tax as a protective wall to cheap imports. Now, smugglers are breaching the wall. As a result, the chicken cartel has to contend with cheap imports just the same. And Customs Commissioner Tony Bernardo and his police are spending government money and resources chasing smuggled chicken parts all over Southern Luzon and Metro Manila. If the matter were not so serious, it would be downright comical.

While all this chasing around is going on, the Filipino consumer is paying a high price for his chicken dinner. Whether chicken is imported/smuggled or not, the Filipino consumer pays the tax anyway. This is because the cartel has added it on to chicken prices.

The tax was meant to protect the chicken cartel, but it is the Filipino consumer who pays the resulting high price. If the cartel is to be protected, why is the Filipino consumer paying for the cost of protection?

There is another point to consider. Under the tax code, importing non-essential goods, such as jewelry, precious and semi-precious stones, perfumes, pleasure vessels like yachts are taxed 20 percent only. This is one way the government soaks the rich.

But chicken is the poor man's meat. It is cheaper than pork or beef. It is even cheaper than *talakitok* or *pampano*. And because of its shorter cooking time, chicken is cheaper to prepare. Why then is the government soaking the poor with a 40-percent import tariff?

It is time for the Filipino consumer to fight back. He can fight back with his most potent weapon: boycott. Why don't we consumers boycott chicken altogether?

At my house and those of my three sons, chicken has been scratched from the weekly menu. The chicken cookbook has been shelved. I will miss *adobo*, *tinola*, *sinampalokan*, *afritada*, *carajay* and *galantina* but life will go on. For *merienda*, I have shifted to beef mami. When we eat out, my clan will avoid the chicken menu.

My drinking buddies and I have skipped fried wings as a *pulutan*. My breakfast club will turn down what chicken there is available at breakfast. My lunch group will no longer meet at the fried chicken place.

Let's face it, one can go through life without a sip of chicken soup or a bite of roast chicken leg.

Come, join my friends and me in this boycott. We will continue the boycott until the 40-percent import tax is stricken out. Together, we will all enjoy watching chicken prices come tumbling down.

Cocktales

From page B3

saved their allowance to buy a guitar or a bike, and the '80s child dreamt of his first Walkman, today's kids pine for the latest cell phones and download the hippest ring tones.

As the new Smart service Addict aptly suggests, cell phones have become the 21st century's opium of the masses, with the telecom companies having replaced banks as the fastest money-spinners.

Showdown in Seattle

BANCO Filipino vice chair Albert "Bobby" Aguirre is fighting attempts by his younger sister Nanette to put him on the witness stand in a Seattle court where, ironically, Bobby himself had instigated the hearings.

In addition, Bobby's US counsel last week asked the Seattle District Court judge to suppress any testimony that would show the size of the multibillion-peso estate of Banco Filipino/BF Homes patriarch Tomas Aguirre and how much money out of the estate went to Bobby's companies.

The Seattle case had been initiated by Bobby in an attempt to collect the $4-million "gift" that Nanette received from their father before he passed away.

Bobby, on the other hand, claimed the money was a "loan" that has remained unpaid; he now wants to foreclose on the retirement home business in a Seattle suburb that Nanette has established with the fund, in addition to seizing her Manila home.

In lieu of him, Bobby has submitted the name of Ma. Amelita "Girlie" Villarosa, president of the Aguirre holding company Top Man, but it is unclear whether she would fly to Seattle as Villarosa is now busy campaigning to reclaim her old congressional seat in Occidental Mindoro.

The actual trial has been set to start Feb. 23. Before that, the Seattle judge would rule this week as to whether Bobby, who spends most of the time now in his expansive polo farm in Australia, should appear in court and be subjected to cross-examination.

Bobby is also fighting attempts to put him on the witness stand in the probate hearings at the Parañaque Regional Trial Court to determine the extent of the Aguirre estate.

Bobby's local counsels include the Roco Kapunan law firm, Perfecto Yasay Jr., and Magdalo lawyer Homobono Adaza.

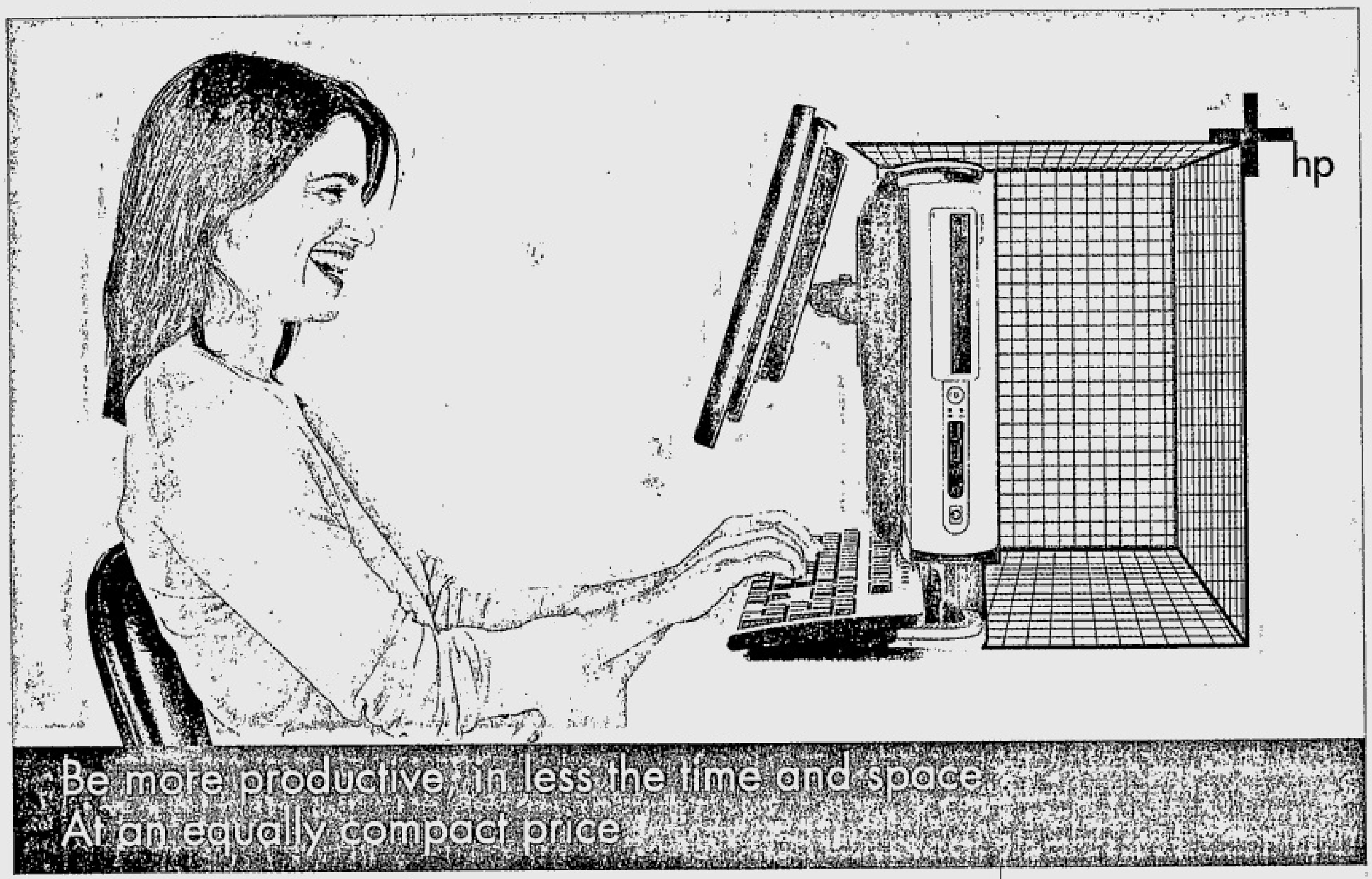
Nanette is being represented by Jose "Bong" Bernas.

Heard through the grapevine

AN illegitimate daughter of the late businessman Sy Pio Lato, whose Leonel garbage trucks monopolized Manila during Alfredo Lim's watch, is suing the widow for allegedly having been kept out of her rightful inheritance.

The widow lives in Dasmariñas Village. The "other" daughter, on the other hand, is still a college student.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)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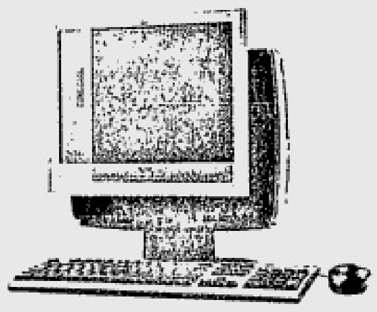

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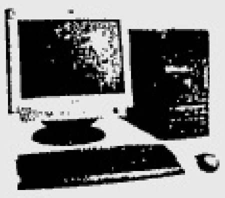

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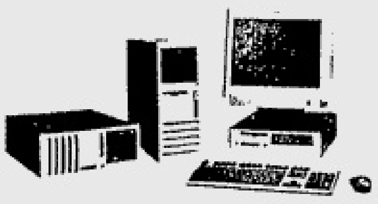

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*Source: IDC Asia/Pacific Quarterly PC Tracker, 3Q 2003

CONTENT DEVELOPMENT

Smart acquires Wolfpac

By Abigail L. Ho

IN A bid to maintain its leadership in the cellular service arena, Smart Communications Inc. has acquired an 80-percent stake in wireless applications service provider Wolfpac Communications Inc.

"The acquisition is in line with Smart's efforts to maintain its leadership in wireless services. Integrating the capabilities of the country's leading content and applications developer into Smart enhances our ability to provide a steady supply of innovative services for our customers," Smart president and chief executive Napoleon Nazareno said in a statement over the weekend.

Wolfpac is one of the country's leading mobile content providers, having been nominated twice as "best wireless applications developer" in the international GSM Association Awards.

It developed Smart's Text SSS service, which allowed users to gain access to information regarding their Social Security System accounts, including the amount of their contribution and the status of their loans, via text messaging.

The mobile applications developer likewise developed Smart's text-based trivia game, Text to Millions.

Even with Smart's acquisition of a majority stake in the company, Wolfpac's incumbent management will continue running it.

Under the agreement, Smart will tap the applications service provider for local content and applications development, including platform development and overseas marketing.

Buying into Wolfpac also does not prevent Smart from tapping other mobile applications developers for other products and services.

The country's cellular giant can also still develop its own platforms and content.

Smart has not been totally dependent on third-party service providers to come up with new products and services to offer to its more than 13 million subscribers.

BF asks Bangko Sentral to release ₱2B in loan

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANCO Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank is asking the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to release an additional P2.179 billion in emergency loan, which forms part of the P3.519-billion standby credit facility approved by the Monetary Board in December 2002.

The bank, based on official documents, also asked the BSP to convert the P1.34 billion in emergency loan released in December 2002 into a 15-year obligation.

An emergency loan is a short-term facility which can be converted into a long-term obligation if a bank enters into a rehabilitation program with the central bank.

A rehabilitation program usually involves specific programs aimed at improving a company's balance sheet and the infusion of fresh capital.

The savings bank had sought the liquidity facility "to ensure the long term viability of the bank." The loan would be secured by real estate collateral, according to the official document.

Sources said the monetary authorities had approved the release of P400 million for Banco Filipino.

The Monetary Board pointed out that its so-called special liquidity facility or emergency loans was to be used primarily to service withdrawals.

The central bank pointed out that Banco Filipino's deposit base had been stable, indicating that it had no need for an emergency loan facility.

The savings bank, controlled by the Aguirre family, also sought the Monetary Board approval for the expansion of its loan portfolio.

But the BSP instead, advised the bank to focus first on reducing its non-performing loans amounting to P4.52 billion.

In a letter to the Monetary Board, Banco Filipino chair and president Teodoro Arcenas last year sought the support of the the central bank.

Last year, the BSP called the attention of Banco Filipino for incurring P1.88 billion in Dosri loans, of which only P858.88 million was within the prescribed ceiling of the central bank.

The central bank found out that Banco Filipino extended the Dosri loans to several corporations without the written approval of the majority of the directors.

'03 ecozone exports exceed 10% growth goal

By Michelle V. Remo

THE PHILIPPINE Economic Zone Authority reported that exports by locators jumped 20 percent in 2003 largely due to manufacturing expansion and higher demand from abroad.

"Companies continue to expand, and this shows that they are confident in doing business here," said Peza Director General Lilia De Lima.

De Lima said in a press briefing that Peza exports amounted to $27.33 billion in 2003, compared with $22.77 billion in 2002.

She said the 20-percent rise in exports revenue surpassed the 10-percent growth target for 2003.

Peza, which account for about 70 percent of the country's total exports, said the government agency was expecting a continued growth in exports this year in view of big-ticket projects that were in the pipeline.

Without divulging the identities of the companies that are set to invest this year, De Lima said most of them were engaged in the business of electronics. She said the expected increase in investments in the electronics sector would help the industry achieve its 10-percent revenue growth target for 2004.

The electronics sector is the country's biggest dollar earner among local industries.

Early in the year, Peza reported that investments already grew by a hefty 420 percent. For January, it announced that investments made mostly by existing locators amounted to P9.571 billion compared with the P1.839 billion recorded in January 2003.

She said the rise in investments was proof companies continue to have faith in the Philippines contrary to the negative perception that many firms are already considering locating to another country.

The country's volatile political scenario is often blamed to create a picture of uncertainty that is not good for business.

De Lima said that while some locators were beginning to establish facilities in other countries, it did not mean that they were taking their investments away from the Philippines. Peza earlier reported that investments in 2003 rose 3.45 percent. From P27.446 billion in 2002, investments reached P28.395 in 2003.

The rise in investments resulted in an increase in employment from 820,960 in 2002 to 910,932 in 2003. This translated to a 10.9-percent growth in jobs created by Peza-registered companies.

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SSS looking for ways to book sale of 29% stake in E-PCIBank

By Doris C. Dumlao

PENSION fund Social Security System is exploring ways to book the sale of its 29-percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank without reflecting a loss.

SSS president Cora dela Paz said during the Philippine Stock Exchange-Bloomberg forum last week that booking a loss at this time may "impact on the operating budget of the SSS and hamper operations."

"This is not a matter of pride," she added.

SSS has a binding agreement to sell its controlling stake in Equitable PCI Bank to Banco de Oro Universal Bank of retail magnate Henry Sy Sr.

The P14-billion price set for the 29-percent block represented a 30 percent premium over market prices but below the pension fund's book value.

"If I can find an accounting solution to my problem, I'll find it," Dela Paz said.

She said that the SSS' charter provides that it should trim its operating expenses if losses are incurred.

"The SSS does not want to disrupt service to its members. And I believe, the 25-million strong membership would not take too kindly to this possibility either," she said.

SSS has always declared that it was looking at the BDO proposal as an option to cut losses.

"It is an option to cut both our actual and opportunity losses because SSS would be able to lock into an asset that will yield a rate of return of at least 9.5 percent for the next 6-1/2 years," Dela Paz said.

Reacting to the strong public criticisms of the proposed sale, she said: "I may be in the eye but I can assure the public that as far as I can see, after all is said and done, we'll see that there's no reason for the storm."

Asean tasks RP to craft electronics program

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ASSOCIATION of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) has tasked the Philippines to craft programs to boost the electronics sector and prevent China from further eating into the region's market share.

This was disclosed by Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima, who represented the Philippines during last month's Economic Ministers Meeting held in Indonesia.

The Philippines got the job because electronics is the country's biggest export product.

The program is scheduled to be presented during the next meeting scheduled for October.

Purisima said the Philippines will adopt a "China Strategy" to further develop the region's electronics industry.

Under the program, the Philippines will make an inventory of all electronics companies that moved their operations from Southeast Asia to China.

"We will try to determine the things they consider as China's advantage over Asean. We will try to entice them back or see what else we can do (about the matter)," said Purisima in a briefing.

Purisima added that another way to help the Asean electronics sector compete head on with China is, ironically, for the two to work together.

He explained that finding areas of cooperation between the Asean and China would boost the region's electronics sector.

"The Asean's electronics industry is (adversely) affected by China. If we can't compete with China, maybe we can just work with them," he said.

While the Philippines is working on the electronics program, other Asean countries were tasked to craft programs for other industries.

Malaysia is assigned to the rubber and garments industries; Indonesia, automotive and wood-based industries; Singapore, healthcare and Thailand, tourism.

Purisima said developing strategies to boost various industries in Southeast Asia is part of efforts to create an Asean Economic Community (AEC) by 2020.

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Baguio Country Club	680,000	650,000
Canlubang Golf Club	400,000	-
Canyon Woods	160,000	100,000
Camp John Hay	-	190,000
Capitol Hills	180,000	130,000
Calatagan Golf Club A/B**	70,000/Pls. Call	-
Cebu Country Club	-	1,230,000
Celebrity Sports Club	-	155,000
Club Filipino	150,000	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	300,000/400,000**	250,000
Eastridge A/B*	-	70,000/100,000*
Evercrest	80,000	-
Fontana D/C*/A**	70,000/140,000*/230,000**	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	170,000/220,000*/250,000**	-
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	9,450,000
Manila Polo	-	2,250,000
Manila Yacht Club	550,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	450,000/520,000*	370,000/480,000*
Metropolitan Club	100,000	-
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	110,000/250,000*
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	230,000/300,000*	-
Phil. Columbian	65,000	-
Puerto Azul A/B	100,000/150,000*	-
Quezon City Sports Club A	170,000	-
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	130,000/150,000*/380,000**	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	300,000	270,000
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Sherwoods A/B*/C**	70,000/Pls. Call*	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,300,000/1,650,000*	-
Subic Bay Yacht Club (Corp.)	150,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	340,000	-
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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,150,000	1,400,000
Baguio Country Club	650,000	700,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	60,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	220,000
Canlubang	400,000	450,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	135,000	150,000
Cebu Country Club	1,200,000	Please Call
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000-	200,000
Club Filipino	-	120,000
Eagleridge "A"	240,000	320,000
Eagleridge "B"	250,000	320,000
Eagleridge "C"	-	400,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	150,000
Forest Hills "B"	180,000	200,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	-	200,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,600,000	-
Manila Golf (Individual)	9,500,000	10,500,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,300,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	400,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	550,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	400,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	170,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	250,000	275,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	170,000	250,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	-	400,000
Quezon City Sports Club	Please Call	200,000
Riviera Golf Club "A"	-	90,000
Riviera Golf Club "B"	-	110,000
Riviera Golf Club "C"	-	125,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Spa & Lodge	520,000	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,150,000	1,300,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,350,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	180,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	300,000	340,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	800,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	680,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	100,000	140,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	250,000
Valley Golf	250,000	300,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	7,100,000

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Globe loses some subscribers

By Abigail L. Ho

GLOBE Telecom Inc. lost some of its subscribers to bitter rival Smart Communications Inc. last year due to the latter's "sachet marketing" strategy.

Globe president and chief executive Gerardo Ablaza Jr. said during Globe's investors briefing last Friday that it lost those subscribers who preferred Smart's more affordable credit reloading schemes.

While Globe ended the year with 8.9 million subscribers, 2.3 million more than in 2002, the company suffered a lot of churn, or disconnection, toward the end of the year.

"In May to November last year, there was a service gap between Globe and Smart in terms of the (electronic load). We lost some subscribers who considered affordability as a major factor (in choosing a service provider). With the six-month validity of (subscriber identification module) cards, the impact was felt in the fourth quarter and we're expecting some more in the first quarter of this year," he explained.

Smart introduced its sachet-type reloading scheme, Smart Load, in May last year.

It allowed its subscribers, as well as those of sister firm Pilipino Telephone Corp.'s Talk 'N Text brand, to make over-the-air reloads for as low as P30.

Globe introduced its counterpart over-the-air reload service, Autoload Max, just last November.

Ablaza, however, was optimistic that the average churn rate this year would be brought down with the introduction of its own prepaid credit reloading schemes.

Globe is also looking at additional revenue following the implementation of a flat rate for voice calls.

Instead of charging different rates for peak and off-peak usage, Globe imposed a single rate of P6.50 per minute for calls between Globe subscribers and P7.50 per minute for calls made to other networks.

"The change in tariff structure was done to realign to the calling habits of subscribers. We wanted to give them more value for money and we also wanted to boost usage. We're not exactly aiming to increase subscriber numbers (through this)," he explained.

Globe last year posted a net income of P10.3 billion, 50 percent higher than in the previous year. Its revenue was driven by voice calls and data-related services, including text messaging.

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CALATAGAN GOLF CLUB "B"	60K	-
CAMP JOHN HAY	220K	-
CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	150K	-
CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	170K	-
CLUB FILIPINO	130K	-
EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"	100K	-
EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "B"	280K	-
FILIPINAS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	300K	-
FONTANA "D"	50K	please call
FOREST HILLS "A"	200K	-
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	200K	please call
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Ind.)	please call	9.7M
MANILA GOLF CLUB (Corp.)	-	10.6M
MANILA POLO CLUB		2.3M
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	400K	375K
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "B"	600K	500K
MIMOSA C2	280K	
MIMOSA C3	-	280K
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "A"		130K
ORCHARD GOLF CLUB "C"	300K	220K
PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	100K	-
PUNTA FUEGO	450K	
QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB		please call
ROCKWELL CLUB	350K	-
ROYALE TAGAYTAY	please call	-
RIVIERA GOLF CLUB "C"	150K	
SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	130K	100K
STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"		1.1M
TAGAYTAY COUNTRY CLUB	325K	
VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB	-	100K
VALLEY GOLF CLUB		240K
WACK WACK GOLF CLUB	7.2M	6.5M

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Makati Sports Club "A"	-	230,00
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	250,00
Punta Fuego	-	pls. call
Rockwell Club	-	330,000
Sharewoods "A"	-	100,000
Tagaytay Highlands	pls. call	-
Tagaytay Midland	650,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	325,000	-
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$354-M Transco contract up for bidding

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE NATIONAL Transmission Corp. said it would bid out in the second half of this year the contract for the $354-million Leyte-Mindanao interconnection project.

Transco president Alan T. Ortiz said in an interview that the bidding for the contract would be held a year earlier than planned.

He said it was still being decided whether the auction of the Leyte-Mindanao contract would be done electronically and if the contractor would secure funding for the project on its own.

Transco is also bidding out within the year contracts for the Cebu-Panay and Cebu-Negros linkup, which are seen to address the electricity shortage in the Visayas.

Under Transco's Mindanao transmission augmentation program or Project Minta, the company is likewise rushing some P2.1 billion worth of projects to address the overloading of selected power transformer units and improve the reliability of service in the island.

Transco documents showed that the projects would modernize and add capacity to existing substations and expand the 69-kilovolt transmission lines.

The biggest of these projects is the P1.02-billion transmission and substation capacity project for Region 11. Complementary substation works under the project are seen completed by March 2004.

Other projects include a P258.7-million transmission capacity addition in Central Mindanao and P248.6-million improvement of the Abaga-Lugait-Tagoloan circuit.

There are also substation capacity additions and modernization worth P200.7 million for Region 13 (Caraga), P195.6 million in Region 9, P156.7 million in Region 10 and the P67.4-million substation improvement projects in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 30, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	50,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49.5	51.5	49.5	50	792,200
Citystate Savings Bank	16.25	16.25	16.25	16.25	1,800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41	41	41	41	182,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.5	0.51	0.5	0.51	250,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	28	26	27	307,500
Philippine National Bank	24.5	24.5	24.25	24.25	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	27.5	28	27.5	28	1,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard, Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	183,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1955	1955	1955	1955	360
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	355,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1490	1495	1485	1485	1,350
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24	24	23.5	24	3,700
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.75	1,930,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	945	945	920	925	122,650
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.048	0.046	0.047	8,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.041	0.041	0.039	0.041	1,300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	39,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.44	1.54	23,540,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	80,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	905	905	860	865	368,550
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	19,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.75	20.5	19.75	20.5	265,000
Manila Electric Co. B	33	34.5	32.5	34	2,009,200
Petron Corp.	2.9	3	2.9	3	8,615,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	103,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3.25	3.3	3.25	3.3	128,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	80,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	1,110,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	37,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	7,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31.5	31	31.5	117,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	20	20	19.75	20	206,200
Swift Food Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	50,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56.5	57	56.5	57	83,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70	71	70	71	249,700
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	400,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	10,000
Ayala Corp.	6	6.1	6	6.1	1,655,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.25	3.25	3.2	3.2	875,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	700,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	5,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.66	0.67	0.63	0.67	6,660,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.18	0.185	0.17	0.17	510,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	200,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	23.5	23.75	23.25	23.75	711,700
Global Business Hldgs Inc.	45.5	54	45.5	46	6,500
Ionics Inc.	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	26,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.2	5,022,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.31	21,030,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Spi Technologies, Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	500
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	300,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	5,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	5,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	2,100,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	20,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	1,100,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	3,200
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	23.75	24.25	23.75	24.25	153,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	400	400	400	400	1,700
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.1	6.3	6.1	6.3	3,622,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.13	0.14	0.13	0.14	6,720,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	2,050,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.1	1.1	8,988,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.77	0.77	0.75	0.75	300,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	500,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	129,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	19,441,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	2,120,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,580,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	75,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	118,000,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	26,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.003	0.003	40,000,000
Pacifica	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	5,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	2,130,110	60,128,870.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	116,840,100	655,473,285.00
PRO	42,050,000	154,127,460.00
Mining	196,700,000	2,299,400.00
OIL	71,000,000	244,500.00
GRAND TOTALS :	428,720,210	872,273,515.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	467.33	UP 2.56
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,292.96	DOWN 23.34
PRO	572.79	UP 8.56
Mining	1,557.56	DOWN 24.66
OIL	1.30	UNCH 0.00
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	937.92	DOWN 5.97
Composite	1,508.30	DOWN 6.85

NO. OF ADVANCES: 24, NO. OF DECLINES: 22, NO. OF UNCHANGED: 41, NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 87, NO. OF TRADES: 2,592

Stocks seen to weaken

From page B1

peso volatility," Liu said.

The peso, which has fallen to unchartered territory, tumbled to a historic low of 56.22 to the dollar last week.

"Once there are positive developments, we'll go from there," Liu said.

Banco de Oro Universal Bank chief strategist Jonathan Ravelas said Friday's close at 1,508.30 suggested the market would peak at about 1,575.21 over the near term.

"A break below the 1,495-1,500 support could call for further losses toward the 1,400-1,450 levels. Only a move back above the 1,560- 1,570 levels would suggest an attempt toward the 1,600 levels," he said.

AB Capital Securities analyst Jose Vistan said that it was now the season for reporting corporate earnings and investors would take cue from upcoming releases.

"So far, the results already released have generally been strong. If the coming releases will continue to show good numbers, it may help provide some support to the market," Vistan said.

"However, it may not be enough to inspire some more buying. Share prices have surged since the start of the year, making investors nervous that stocks may have gotten ahead of themselves," he said.

Vistan said the political and economic concerns would continue to hound the market until the May elections.

"In the near term, we don't think there's a huge upside in the major indexes after the run we've seen and because of the recent turn of events. However, on a individual issues basis, we still see good opportunities out there and through the first quarter. Among them are First Philippine Holdings, SM Prime Holdings and Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Gov't warns currency . . .

From page B1

Buenaventura blamed political uncertainties for aggravating the peso's weakness alongside more fundamental reasons like increased corporate demand and a strengthening dollar.

"We are paying a premium of about P5 due to political uncertainties. The peso should only be about P12 weaker compared to the Thai baht but the differential had widened to about P17," he said. The baht is about 39 to a dollar.

Buenaventura said the peso would remain volatile until the May elections but could recover once a clear mandate was given to whoever wins the May presidential polls.

"It is a natural reaction for investors to cut their losses and just come back once things have stabilized," Buenaventura added.

The BSP said the peso would average at 56 to $1 this year from 54.50 in 2003. So far, the peso has shed 4 percent of its value since the start of the year and averaged at 55.51 in January.

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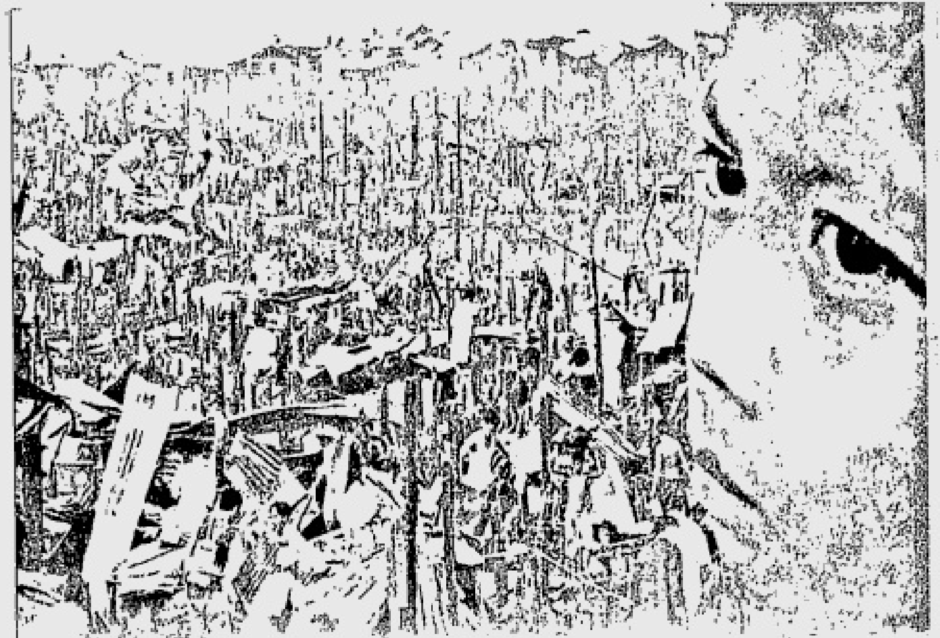

Rekindle the embers of hope.

On Jan. 11, 2004, more than 25,000 people were left homeless due to a fire that razed the Baseco Compound in Tondo. Residents were moved to nine evacuation centers and now need food, clothes, medicine, vitamins, toiletries, mats, blankets, milk, feeding bottles and clean water. Relief assistance can be coursed through the Bayanihang Baseco campaign, one manifestation that Filipinos care and are heroes in their own way by helping others out of difficult times.

Bayanihang BASECO is spearheaded by SW-NCR

HOW TO HELP:
* For bulk donations -- DSWD-NCR: Director Alicia R. Bala, Ms. Dominga Godinez & Ms. Lorelie Suelo, 389 San Rafael St. Quiapo, Manila or call 7348647'49 17/37
* For evacuees' daily needs -- Manila Dept. of Social Welfare: Dr. Jose M. Barranda, Manila City Hall, or call 5274916/5274949
* For perishable goods -- Barangay Office: Chairman Tess Lumactud, Brgy. 649, Bagong Lupa, Baseco, or call 4041847
* McDonald's restaurants & Petron service stations in the NCR region will also serve as drop-off centers.

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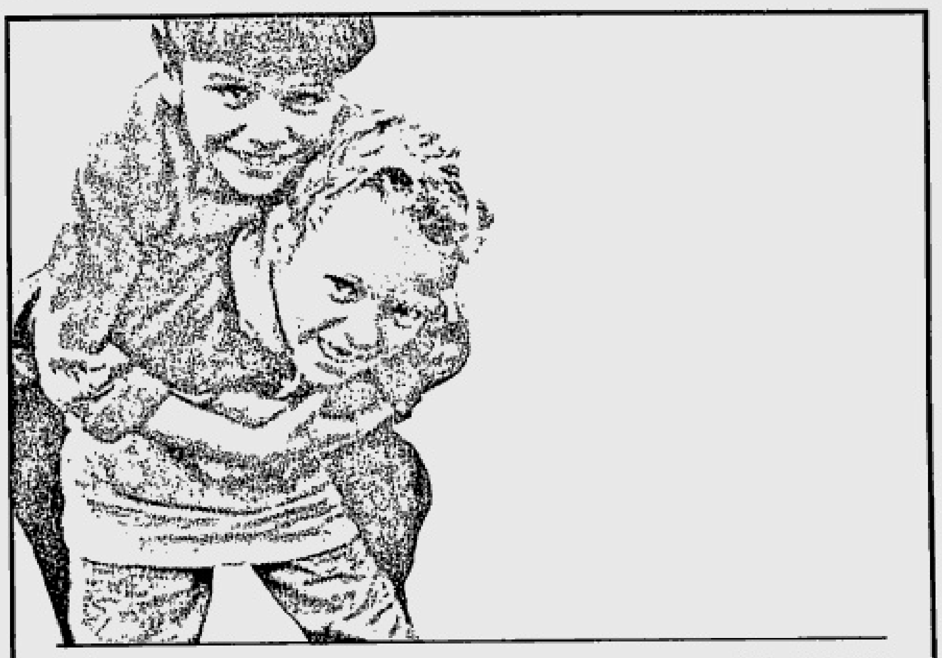

VERY OFTEN ALL IT TAKES TO LEAP FROM A SMALL BUSINESS TO A BIG BUSINESS IS A LITTLE LEVERAGE ALONG THE WAY.

For many small companies, a fair chance is all that's needed to make it to the big leagues. A slight advantage in the form of sound advice, proper representation, or even the right financial package to fuel its potential growth. It's the kind of leverage that CKP has provided for many companies that have transformed themselves into market leaders.

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A Microfinance Revolution in the Making

Microfinance is not a new concept. By law, it simply refers to loans in amounts below 150,000 pesos. It is only recently that microfinance has taken on a new aspect through the current upsurge in micro-enterprise lending. Small amounts in the area of a few thousand pesos are being used to start new businesses at the grassroots level. All over the Philippines, the phenomenon of microfinance is making a difference in the lives of small entrepreneurs. In economically depressed areas of Mindanao, micro-enterprise lending is making its mark due to the efforts of a unique financial institution: One Network Bank.

Financial partner for the masses

One Network Bank is a consolidated rural bank consisting of top performing rural banks Rural Bank of Panabo (RB Panabo), Network Rural Bank (Network Bank) and Provident Rural Bank of Cotabato (ProBank). With the consolidation approved by the Monetary Board Resolution No. 1865 last December 22, 2003, One Network Bank will eventually be the largest rural bank in the Philippines and, with its 46 branches, the most extensive rural banking network in Mindanao.

For its clients, One Network Bank is less a bank and more of a financial partner. Regular monthly consultation and observation visits are strictly adhered to as the success of the bank is closely tied to the success of its clients. To date, One Network Bank's program of close customer support has resulted in financial success for the vast majority of its clients. For the rural folk, being able to tap into professional financial management expertise is a critical factor for the growth of their businesses.

MORE Rice please

One notable grassroots program of One Network Bank is the Modern and Organized Rice Farming System or MORE Rice Program. The programs stated aim is to increase rice yield and make the Filipino farmer globally competitive by introducing the latest available technology for farming practices including the use of rice hybrids.

Managed by the Corporative Systems Foundation Inc. (Corpo Foundation), a non-stock, non-profit foundation of One Network Bank, the MORE Rice Program gives participating farmers access to the latest in agricultural technology and an efficient administrative framework in which to work. Invaluable to the program is the Landbank of the Philippines, which has consistently supported and assisted the MORE Rice Program.

Cascading agricultural technology to the level of the individual farmer has proven to be difficult due to the lack of communications between agricultural researchers and grassroots farmers and lukewarm financial support due to perceived risks. To overcome this resistance, the MORE Rice Program initially guarantees participating farmers revenue regardless of actual output. Management of the rice production areas under the Program is taken over by Corpo Foundation's technicians in order to infuse proper technological inputs into the hybrid rice production process, The safety net provided by the assured income to the participants ensures a measure of security to the farmer and facilitates the smooth progress of the program while the farmer learns the vagaries of hybrid rice cultivation. Once the farmers acquire the technology, the program provides for the turnover of the farm back to the farmers, who will then have the skills to make their rice production areas more productive than before.

The MORE Rice Program furthers the cause of Philippine agricultural research while making the benefits of this research available at the grassroots level. This puts the power in the hands of the enterprising farmer and spurs local economic growth. With increased productivity come cost reductions that put Filipino farmers on more competitive footing with low-cost rice imports brought about by globalization initiatives.

Of Mindanao, by Mindanao, for Mindanao

But the most powerful rallying cry of One Network Bank is one built around a concept: Pera ng Mindanao, Para sa Mindanao. This philosophy states that the people of Mindanao should be the first to enjoy the resources of Mindanao. A direct challenge to the current banking paradigm of centralization, this movement intends to bring about economic growth by keeping Mindanao's money invested in Mindanao and its people. With this philosophy and existing programs, One Network Bank shows its commitment to Mindanao and its people. While regionalistic in nature, this commitment has created a financial institution that admirably adheres to its principles and promises to accomplish what few institutions can claim: help Mindanao achieve its full economic potential.

As per Monetary Board Resolution 1865, formal approval with incentives of One Network Bank's consolidation is handed over to representatives of One Network Bank on Jan. 2, 2004. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: BSP Deputy Governor Alberto V. Reyes, BSP Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura, One Network Bank Chair Victor A. Consunji and One Network Bank President Alex V. Buenaventura.

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I EXTEND my warmest congratulations to PHILSSA for successfully holding the first ever National Convention on Social Security in the Philippines!

You have accomplished a monumental feat in gathering the various sectors of society towards the appreciation of the various social security and assistance programs instituted by the government as lifelines in times of sickness, old age, and emergencies for many Filipinos.

This National Convention is a big step towards improving the social security systems in the country and discovering better methods for long-term stability. We have made advances in extending compulsory coverage to informal sectors but we must work harder to make the programs more comprehensive to meet the demands of all Filipinos.

My administration will continuously help booster social security and assistance programs so that a citizenry protected against economic and social distress and freed from the bonds of poverty can rise to build the strong republic we wish in the Philippines.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO (*Sgd.*)
President
Republic of the Philippines

REVIVING PHILSSA is one of the best moves we have made in 2003. PHILSSA member-institutions banded for a purpose eight years ago and there is no better time than the present to renew its commitment to advance the cause of social security in the Philippines.

This time around, we pledge to cooperate in the defense, promotion and development of social security and assistance in the country.

We have organized the first National Convention on Social Security to jumpstart our plans for the new and better PHILSSA. We hope to tap the help of our stakeholders and various sectors of society in coming up with resolutions to enhance member-institutions' over-all fiscal management and operations. No better people to get advice from than the people who will benefit from our endeavors.

We know that we can address challenges better as an organization but the support of various sectors of society will concretize our collective goals to enhance our service and expand the coverage of social security and assistance in the Philippines.

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, MSc. (*Sgd.*)
Chairperson, PHILSSA

Sa PHILSSA: "Segurong Panlipunan, Sigurado Ako!"

Member agencies individually and synergistically contributing to, and benefiting from, the development, enhancement and promotion of social security programs, ever responsive to the needs of our people.

PHILSSA OFFICERS

Ma. Livia "Honey Girl" Singson-de Leon Chairman PCSO	Cesar M. Jayme Jr. President AFPRSBS	Elmor D. Juridico Exec. Director ECC	Francisco T. Duque III, MD, MSc. President & CEO PhilHealth	Atty. Winston F. Garcia Pres. & Gen. Manager GSIS	Corazon S. dela Paz President & CEO SSS	Atty. Romero Federico S. Quimbo President & CEO HDMF

Schedule of Activities

2 February 2004

7:30-8:30 Arrival & Registration of Participants and GuestsEARLY SNACKS

8:30-8:45 Doxology & National Anthem PhilHealth Choir

8:45-9:00 Welcome Address Dr. Francisco T. Duque IIIPHILSSA Chairperson andPhilHealth President and CEO

9:00-9:45 Overview of Social Security Speaker: Mr. Werner Konrad Blenk, Subregional Director for South East Asia and the Pacific International Labour Organization

Reactors: Justice Hugo E. GutierrezChairman, Globus Care, Inc. andParamount Insurance Corporation; Mr. Reynaldo C. Centeno, EVP-Chief Financial Officer & Chief ActuaryPhilippine American Life General Insurance Company

Moderator:Mr. Rizaldy T. CapulongDeputy Chief Actuary and AVP, Securities Trading and Trading Mgt. SSS

9:45-10:00 Open Forum
Arrival of Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

10:00 AM Arrival and Opening of Exhibit

10:20 Introduction of the Keynote Speaker Dr. Francisco T. Duque IIIPhilHealth President & CEO and PHILSSA Chairperson

10:30 Keynote Speech Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo

12:00-1:00 LUNCH
Entertainment GSIS Chorale

1:00-1:15 Introduction of Participants

1:15-2:15 Showcase of PHILSSA Member Agencies

AFPRSBS	Mr. Cesar M. Jayme Jr.AFPRSBS President & CEO
ECC	Mr. Elmor D. JuridicoPHILSSA Vice-Chairperson andECC Executive Dir.
GSIS	Atty. Winston F. GarciaPHILSSA Treasurer andGSIS Pres. & CEO
HDMF	Atty. Romero Federico S. QuimboHDMF President & CEO

2:15-2:45 BREAK

2:45-3:00 Intermission PCSO Chorale

3:00-3:45 PCSO	Ms. Ma. Livia "HoneyGirl" S. De LeonPCSO Chairman
PHIC	Dr. Francisco T. Duque IIIPHILSSA Chairperson and PhilHealth President & CEO
SSS	Ms. Corazon S. De la PazSSS President & CEO

3:45-4:30 Open Forum
Emcees: Ms. Linda Laureta
Mr. Roger Ramirez

3 February 2004

7:30-8:30 Arrival of Participants and Guests

8:30-9:00 Recap of Day 1 Activities Lt. Col. Edmund F. Gammad AFPRSBS

9:00-10:00

Funding Social Security Benefits Speaker: Mr. Miguel Navarro-Martin, Senior Financial Sector SpecialistWorld Bank

Reactors: Hon. Mario L. Relampagos, Undersecretary Department of Budget and Management; Ms. Elizabeth Ablaza-Reyes, PresidentActuarial Society of the Philippines

Moderator: Ms. Fe S. Dayco, VP for Actuary, GSIS

10:00-10:15 SNACKS

10:15-11:15 Global Trend on Social Security Governance Speaker: Atty. Hector B. Inductivo, Regional Director for Asia & the Pacific International Social Security Association

Reactors: Prof. Edwin S. Pineda, Senior Economist University of Asia and the Pacific Ms. Nieves R. Confesor, DeanAsian Institute of Management

Moderator: Ms. Fe S. Dayco VP for Actuary GSIS

11:15-12:00 Open Forum

12:00-1:00 LUNCH
Entertainment SSS Chorale

1:00-2:30 Parallel Workshops

Meeting Room (6 Issues on Contributions & Benefits Meeting Room 7Investment Issues Meeting Room 8Operational Efficiency Issues)

2:15-2:30 Working BREAK

2:30-3:20 Presentation of Workshop Outputs : Plenary

3:20-3:30 Intermission Mr. David MallaAFPRSBS

3:30-4:00 Synthesis of Findings & Agreements Mr. Octavino Q. EsguerraPhilHealth SVP & Chief Actuary andPHILSSA Secretary General

4:00-4:15 Formal Endorsement of Resolutions Dr. Francisco T. Duque IIIPHILSSA Chairperson andPhilHealth President and CEO

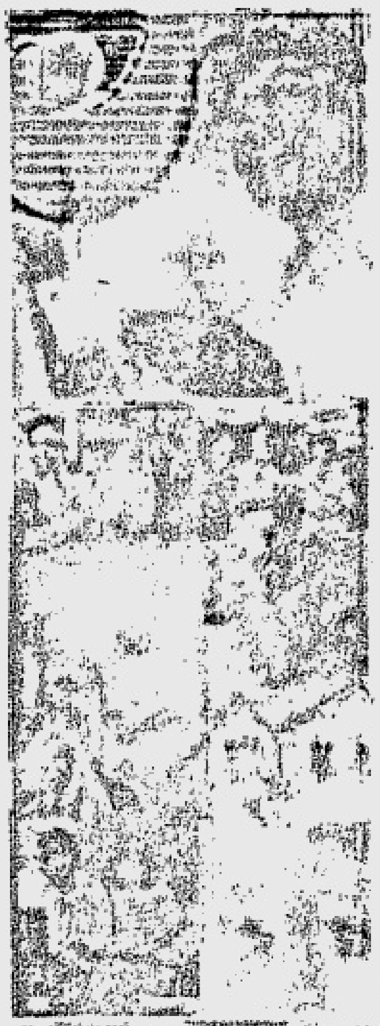
4:15-4:45 Response Hon. Alberto P. RomuloExecutive Secretary

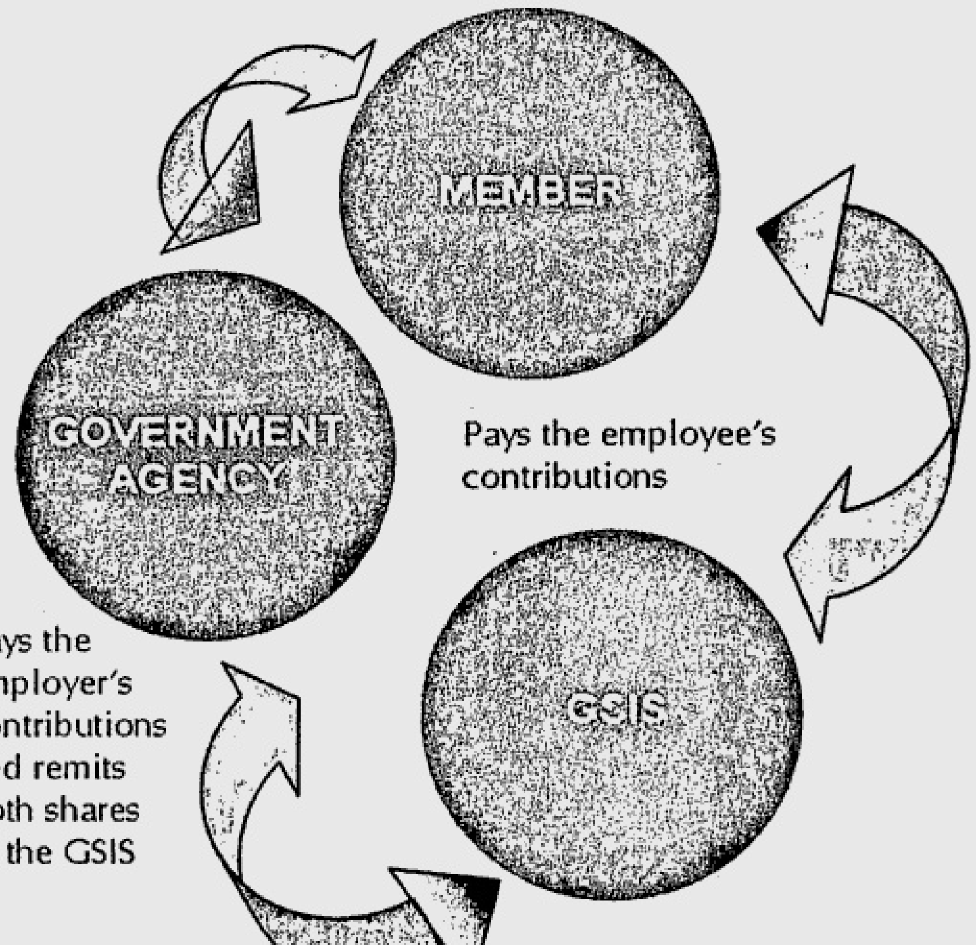
4:45-5:00 Closing Remarks Mr. Elmor D. JuridicoECC Executive Director andPHILSSA Vice-Chairperson

Emcee: Ms. Marissu Bugante Dr. Jun Tad Dequiña

Your GSIS *is a social system.*

As such, it is made up of components whose legal obligations are interrelated and interdependent.




MEMBER
GOVERNMENT AGENCY
Pays the employee's contributions
GSIS
Pays the employer's contributions and remits both shares to the GSIS
Pays benefits after the member and the agency have complied with their legal obligations

If any of these components of the system fails, the entire system will not survive.

Government Service Insurance System

GSIS is strong. Now stronger.

Philippine Social Security Association (PHILSSA)

Sa PHILSSA:
"Segurong Panlipunan, Sigurado Ako!"

THE ASSOCIATION was conceptualized during the 25th General Assembly of the ISSA at Nusa Dua, Indonesia in November 1995. The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), Social Security System (SSS), Employees' Compensation Commission (ECC), Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth), AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (AFPRSBS) and Home Mutual Development Fund (Pag-IBIG Fund) have agreed to created an organization of social security institutions in the Philippines where member-institutions could deliberate and work on matters concerning social security of Filipino workers.

Vision

Member agencies individually and synergistically contributing to, and benefiting from, the development, enhancement and promotion of social security programs, ever responsive to the needs of our people.

Composition

Government Service Insurance System GSIS
Social Security System SSS
Employees' Compensation Commission ECC
Philippine Health Insurance Corporation PhilHealth
AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System AFPRSBS
Home Mutual Development Fund Pag-IBIG Fund
Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office PCSO
Officers and Board Members CY 2002 - 2004:
Dr. Francisco T. Duque III President and CEO-PhilHealth (Chairman)
Mr. Elmor D. Juridico Executive Director-ECC (Vice-Chairman
Atty. Winston F. Garcia President and General Manager-GSIS (Treasurer)
Ms. Corazon S. De la Paz President and CEO-SSS
Mr. Cesar M. Jayme Jr. President and CEO-AFPRSBS
Atty. Federico Romero S. Quimbo President and CEO-HDMF
Ms. Ma. Livia "HoneyGirl" S. De Leon Chairman, PCSO
Milestones

July 1996 Dialogue of the ASEAN Social Security Association (ASSA) co-sponsor that led to ASSA's formal creation

July 1996 Seminar on "Asia: the Impact of Demography on Social Security coordinator

September E.O. 369 Creating the social protection committee to harmonize

1996 and coordinate social protection policies and programs

1997 concept paper on Tax exemption and other Tax Problems of Social Security Institutions and Social Security Data System

Manual on Fraud/Abuse Control and Detection System in Social Security Administration

Handbook on the Philippine Social Security Association

June 1998 Gentlemen's agreement to rotate the Chairmanship and the Presidency of the PHILSSA

1998-2002 Hiatus

August 2002 1st PHILSSA Executive Board meeting after 4-year hiatus

October 2002 Re-Organization, Election of Officers, and constitution of Technical Working Committee (TWC)

February 2003 Registration to the SEC as a Non-stock, non-profit organization

Oath-taking Ceremony with her Excellency P Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo administering the oath

Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) becomes the newest member

June 2003 Strategic Planning Workshop

July 2003 General Assembly

Strategic Directions

1. Communication Plan

The drafting of the PHILSSA Communication Plan was proposed and such plan shall:

¨ Discuss the experiences of other countries and global trends (issues on migrant workers and feminization of labor)

¨ Improve and enhance or promote public acceptance of social security and image of social security institutions

¨ Increase the awareness/consciousness/understanding (to lead to action) of role/benefits/importance of SS in national/socio-economic development and personal lives

¨ Promote understanding of sustainability of social security

Other activities that could further contribute to information dissemination are:

¨ Conduct research

¨ Review of legislative actions focused on social security

¨ Holding a national convention that will showcase each member-agency's programs and services

¨ Linkage with the academe

2. Areas of Collaboration

¨ Collectibles from Government

¨ Co-location of collection counters

¨ Use of common payment/accountable forms

¨ Synchronization of contribution and benefits increase

¨ Across the board policies: standardize statutory limits

¨ Sharing of membership database

¨ How to attack delinquency problems

SA ORAS NG PANGANGAILANGAN, MAAASAHAN!

For Mrs. Florida "Rida" D. Pedrano, life has been a constant struggle. Rida has been a janitress since 1999 and is a 40-year old mother of four. She augments her small income through her sidewalk carinderia near the government agency where she is assigned. Ever industrious, she works at the government office by day, then goes to the market for the carinderia at night.

Misfortune struck, however, when her carinderia was demolished in 2002 as part of sidewalk clearing operations.

Later on, Rida and other food stall owners were allowed to put up their stands on more permanent structures that did not clog the sidewalks. However, Rida had no money to rebuild her small business, so she thought it best to apply for a salary loan with the SSS. She had diligently paid off her first salary loan with the SSS a year earlier, so she was confident that renewing the loan would be easy.

"Laking gulat ko kasi November 11, 2002 ako nag-file ng salary loan application. Kinabukasan, may tseke na agad! Ang bilis talaga," she related.

With her SSS salary loan, Rida was able to rebuild her carinderia and buy new equipment and utensils. She also bought a pig to fatten as an extra income source, which she could later sell or use to breed more livestock.

"Sulit na sulit talaga ang pagiging miyembro ko sa SSS!," she exclaimed.

Millions of SSS members like Rida count on the SSS as a bridge leading to a brighter future. The SSS, in turn, strives to give out benefits and privileges in the shortest possible time, because we know how important these services are to our members. Our Covenant of Service, a formal agreement between the SSS and its members, clearly states how long it should take for each type of social security transaction to be completed.

It is our privilege to serve the SSS member. It is our sacred duty to make timely and meaningful social security a reality.

"Service is at the heart of our organization"

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Kabalikat mo sa Buhay
website: www.sss.gov.ph;
email: member_relations@sss.gov.ph

NGAYON LANG! Dumami ang Pabahay Para sa Masa

Ang Problema Noon

Dahil sa kakulangan ng lupain para sa maralita at sa taas ng interes at mahabang proseso ng housing loan, nanatiling panaginip para sa mga mahihirap na Pilipino ang magkaroon ng sariling bahay at lupa.

AKSYON NI PRESIDENT GLORIA

- Sa pamamagitan ng 46 na proklamasyon ni President Gloria, may 22,600 ektarya ng lupain na pag-aari ng gobyerno ang naipamahagi sa 202,720 pamilya na walang sariling tirahan at lupain.
- Inatasan ni President Gloria ang Pag-IBIG Fund na hatakin pababa ang interes ng housing loans mula 16 hanggang 6 porsiyento at di na inubliga ang mga aplikante na magbigay ng downpayment para sa housing loan hanggang P500,000.
- Sa utos ng Pangulo, itinaas ang pondo ng pabahay mula P10 bilyon hanggang P20 bilyon ngayong taon at sa pamumuno ni Housing Secretary Mike Defensor, pinaikli ang processing time ng housing permits mula 90 araw hanggang 30-45 araw na lamang at pinaunti ang signatories mula 228 hanggang 40 na lamang.

Ang resulta

✓ Nagkaroon ng katiyakan sa paninirahan ang may 693,487 na pamilya samantalang napagaan at napabilis naman para sa libu-libong Pilipino ang pagkakamit ng pinapangarap na sariling bahay.

"Binigyan ko ng diin ang pabahay ng bawat maralita at manggagawa"
— *President GLORIA*

HGC HLURB HUDCC NHA NHMFC PAG-IBIG

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SSS launches Pensioners' Day

WELCOME!
to the
PENSIONERS' DAY

THE SOCIAL Security System (SSS) launched its "Pensioners' Day" project last January 30, 2004 at the SSS main office in Quezon City, in an effort to show its concern to its close to one million retirement, disability and death pensioners.

In its 46 years of service, the SSS has seen fit to honor and serve its pensioners by helping them lead healthy and happy lives - and enjoy their SSS pensions longer.

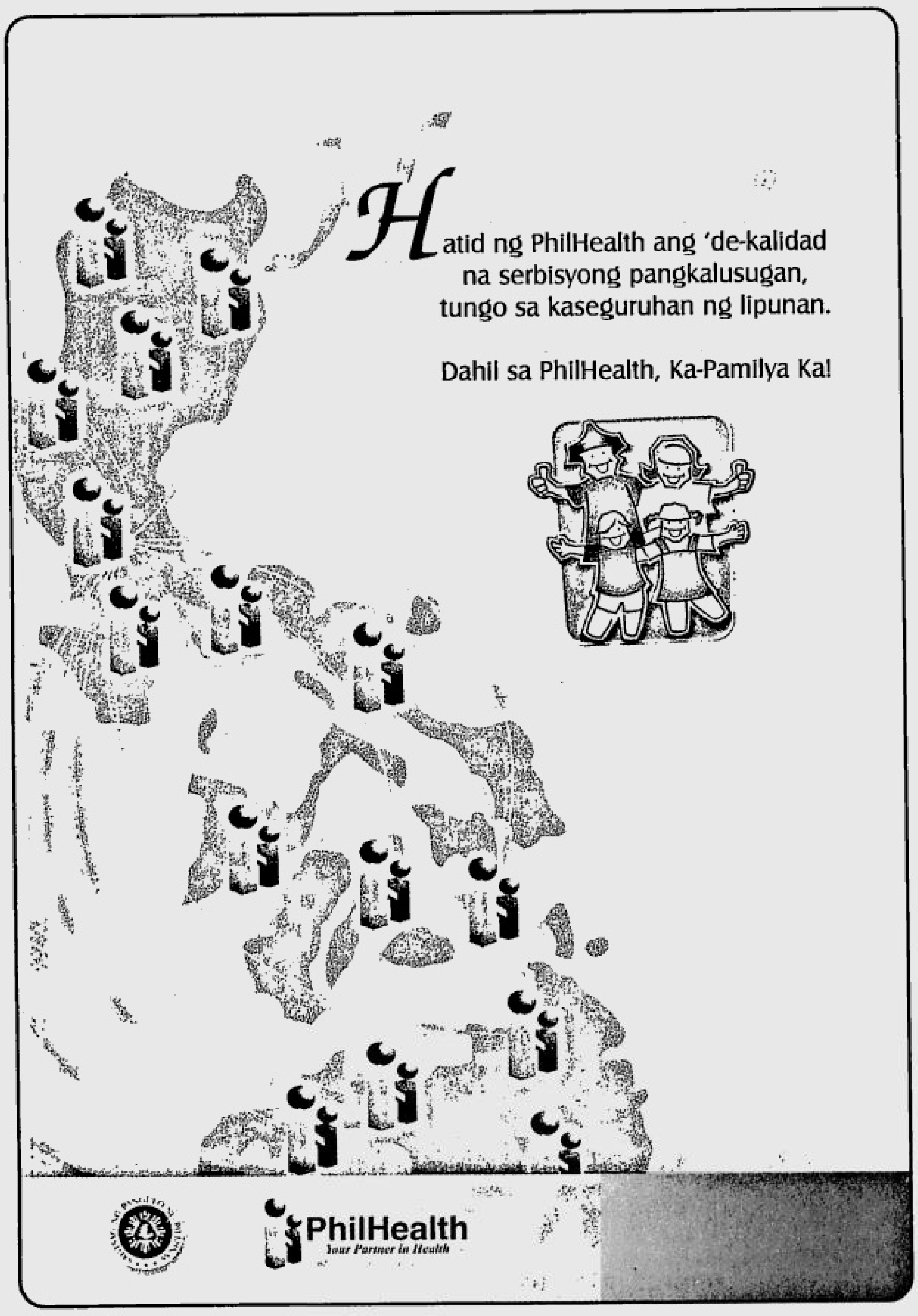
In lieu of an across-the-board pension increase, which the pension fund cannot afford at the moment, the Pensioner's Day project aims to provide other special services that will meet the needs of its pensioners," explained Marissu Bugante, SSS vice president for public affairs and special events.

Bugante said the "Pensioner's Day" project aims to give the elderly, disabled and widowed pensioners of SSS the chance to interact with one another and with SSS officials under a more convivial atmosphere of a monthly fellowship.

The first Pensioners' Day, attended by more than 100 pensioners, was highlighted by a basic orientation on hypertension, conducted by Dr. Roberto Sanidad, Senior Physician of the SSS Healthcare Department. At the same time, SSS doctors and nurses conducted free medical consultations and blood pressure check-ups for the pensioners, and dispensed multi-vitamins and medicines for simple ailments.

The Pensioners' Day will be held every last Friday of the month at the SSS head office. Later on, this will be replicated in its major branches nationwide. Several topics have been lined up for the year, including diabetic care, heart disease prevention, and many others. The next Pensioner's Day will be on February 27 and the health lecture will focus on arthritic care.

The first Pensioners' Day, attended by more than 100 pensioners, was highlighted by a basic orientation on hypertension, conducted by Dr. Roberto Sanidad, Senior Physician of the SSS Healthcare Department. At the same time, SSS doctors and nurses conducted free medical consultations and blood pressure check-ups for the pensioners, and dispensed multi-vitamins and medicines for simple ailments.


Hatid ng PhilHealth ang 'de-kalidad na serbisyong pangkalusugan, tungo sa kaseguruhan ng lipunan.

Dahil sa PhilHealth, Ka-Pamilya Ka!

PhilHealth
Your Partner in Health

FOREIGN JOURNALISTS VISIT INQUIRER

Two chief editors from Indonesia's leading newspapers recently visited the Inquirer offices. In photo are Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot with guests Ahmad (Ibrahim (Ambon Express), Novi Pinontoan (Suara Maluku), and Tessa Piper (Media Development Loan Fund Country Program Director).

The Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines' special activities

Join the Buddy Walk!

BE A "buddy" to hundreds of children with Down Syndrome by joining the Buddy Walk on Sunday, Feb. 8, at Roxas Boulevard. It will start at the Rajah Sulayman Plaza fronting the Malate Church and will end at the CCP Complex. Assembly will be at 6 a.m. The Buddy Walk is part of the celebration of the National Down Syndrome Consciousness month and is aimed at raising public awareness of people with Down Syndrome and improving their quality of life. It is expected to draw the participation of over 3,000 people composed of parents, students, teachers, medical practitioners, TV and sports personalities, volunteers, and the general public. For particulars, call the DSAPI office at 895-96-42 or 895-36-06.

'Tee-up for Downs 2'

JOIN the fund raising golf tournament of the Down Syndrome Association of the Philippines on Feb. 19 at Manila Southwoods. Tee time is from 6:30 to 8:30 a.m. Tickets available at the DSAPI office tel. nos. 895-9642 (Adette) 721-5286 (Portia).

February 2004

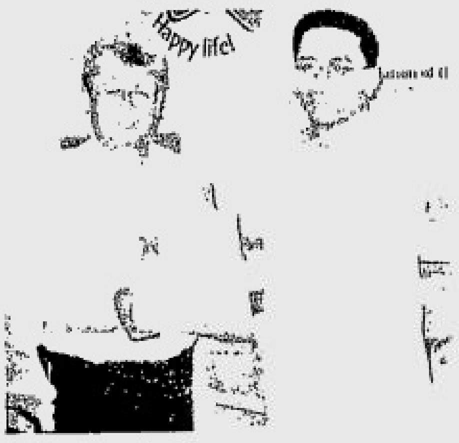
Feb. 8 (Sun) - 2nd Buddy Walk
6 a.m. / Rajah Sulayman Plaza, Roxas Blvd., Manila (fronting Malate Church)

Feb. 19 (Thurs) - DSAPI Golf Cup "Tee-up for Downs - 2"
6:30 a.m. / Manila Southwoods Golf & Country Club Legend Course

Feb. 21 (Sat) - DS Club
2 p.m. to 5 p.m. / DSAPI Office

Feb. 24 to 25 - 2-day Special Olympics

Feb. 29 - Free Medical and Dental Clinic
8 a.m. / San Lorenzo Village, Makati City



TONDO ASTHMATICS GET HELP

Poor residents of Tondo, Manila and its immediate environs who are suffering from asthma and other pulmonary disorders may now get much-needed relief after the Tan Yan Kee Foundation Inc donated seven units of Devilbiss Pulmoaide Nebulizers to the Tondo Medical Center (TMC). Dr. Jose Alexis Panday (right), TMC medical officer, is shown receiving the nebulizers from Tan Yan Kee treasurer Mariano Tanenglian who is representing Tan Yan Kee chair Dr. Lucio Tan. Several government hospitals in Manila, Quezon City and Tarlac were among the first batch of recipients. Through its nebulizer distribution program, the Tan Yan Kee Foundation hopes to carry out the medical and social welfare mission of the Lucio C. Tan Group of Companies.

MAX'S FRANCHISING COO RECEIVES AWARD

AWARDEES
GRAND AWA
"GINTONG
EREMONY
AWARD"
XERS

The Philippine Experimental and Educational Research Society Inc has recently awarded the Gintong Sikap Award for being an Outstanding Business Executive to Max's Franchising Inc chief operating officer Robert Ocampo (third from left). The citation was given in recognition of his exemplary achievements in the pursuit of his profession as well as for having displayed impeccable leadership, silently dedicated service and humanitarian services, thereby contributing much to the country's quest for prosperity and socio-economic development. With Ocampo are: Nita Lozana, Roderick Agustin, and Dr. Yvonne Crisostomo.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 2004

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PARAÑAQUE
Tambo Vilamar 1st St. 805 sqm w/ 2-storey bldg. Behind Pacific Coast Plaza; A. Santos Ave. (Sucat Rd) nr. BF Comm'l Ctr 17,224 sqm; East Service Rd. SLEX cor. 2902 sqm Nr. United Parañaque Subd.; East Service Rd. Nr. Posadas Village 791 sqm;

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PCGG

Presidential Commission on Good Government

INVITATION TO BID

The Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) invites offers to purchase by way of sealed public bidding the following properties:

LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	FLOOR PRICE
BACOLOD CITY Bacolod Reclamation Area, Bacolod City	46,688 square meters, more or less, of residential/commercial land under TCT No. T-219335	P182,083,000.00
PARAÑAQUE CITY Bayview Village, Roxas Boulevard, Baclaran, Parañaque City	4,038 square meters, more or less, of residential/commercial land	P203,028,500.00
TAGAYTAY CITY J.P. Rizal Avenue cor. Akle Road, Tagaytay City	42,043 square meters, more or less, of residential/commercial land under TCT No. T-43969	P126,125,500.00
BATAAN Bgy. Townsite (Cabcaben), Mariveles, Bataan	Site I – 140,274 square meters, more or less, of agricultural land under TCT Nos. T 81837, T 81838 and T-81839	P2,104,185.00
	Site II – 101,861 square meters, more or less, of agricultural land under TCT No. T 81834	P1,629,514.00
NAGA CITY Bgy. Mabolo, Naga City	5,952 square meters, more or less, of residential / commercial land, under TCT No. 13275	P11,902,000.00
ILIGAN CITY Bgy. Palao, Iligan City	6,000 square meters, more or less, of residential/commercial land under TCT No. 21216, including building, broadcasting equipment and furniture and office equipment	P16,194,500.00
LEGAZPI CITY Bgy. Bitano, Legazpi City	Site I 3,327 square meters, more or less, of residential / commercial land under TCT No. 22921	P29,103,250.00
	Site II – 1,834 square meters, more or less, of residential/commercial land under TCT No. 22921	P5,043,000.00

Pre-bidding conference will be held on February 20, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. at the PCGG Conference Room, Ground Floor, IRC Building, #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City. Sealed bids will be accepted, opened and tabulated in the presence of the bidders on March 2, 2004 at 3:00 p.m. at the above-mentioned address.

Complete description/specifications of the properties including bidding guidelines, bid forms, Instructions to bidders and information memorandum are available for a non-refundable fee of ONE THOUSAND PESOS (P1,000.00) at the Asset Management Department, c/o Ms. Alma M. Provido, 3rd Floor, IRC Building, #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City from February 2 to February 17, 2004 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The sale of the properties shall be in **CASH**, on **"AS IS, WHERE IS"** basis.

The PCGG reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or any part thereof, waive any formality or requirements contained therein and accept the offer it considers as the most advantageous to the Government.

PCGG BIDDING COMMITTEE

(PDI–Feb. 1, 2 & 3, 2004)

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A B C CARS/VANS
NEW MODELS W/ OR W/O DRIVER
MLA HO 536-8822 • 303-9789
D.C. BR. 426-2278 • 426-4084

★Vans Coaster Bus 422-9296

L300 741-1356

STAREX 7318549

CAR LOAN

1.5% Fast Car Loan 3677523/24

1.5% CAR LOAN 6567685

1.5% 1HR CAR LOAN3743803

1.5% CARLOAN 373-6519

1.5% CARLOAN 789-0357

1.5% CARLOAN 952-2510

1.5% Easy Carloan 7815352/55

1.5% Fast Car Loan 6560140

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3650974/75

1.5% w/oTaking Car 3732081-82

•1HR Fast Car Loan 7125202•

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/oTaking Car 8966630/33

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 7228942-43

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

BUY/SELL

EDUCATION PLANS 7800106

PETS

Dog School 09192050952

PHILIPPINE DOG SCHOOL TRAINS DOGS w/COMPETENCE TEL. 721-37-36

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

WANTED TO BUY

BUY • SELL • PAWN
ROLEX+OTHERS
DIAMONDS/JEWELRY
Repair / Polish Any watch
MANILA WATCH EXCHANGE
Hyatt • 804-0484 / 834-2886
Greenhills • 724-4374

WE BUY AT HIGH PRICE
ROLEX
5646593 5897041
5633742 0917-8473744

BUYING ROLEX
Other WATCHES, BEST PRICE
0917-8142309 • 7269687
7220433 • 4123543

MISCELLANEOUS

Lego Slide 4Th 634-1212

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE

WANTED
PROJECT ENGINEER
At least 5yrs Work Exp Civil Engr for On-Site Supervision 631-5619 to 20

FEMALE

SALES PROMO GIRLS
White to Fair Complexion FOR Beauty Products 7246781 7272890

URGENT!
Escuela de Sto. Rosario is now in need of B.E.ED Teacher, 22-28 yrs. old, M/F, pref. Pasig, Marikina or Mandaluyong Res. For more details please visit us at #97 DSAA Rosario, Pasig City or Call at Tel. 627-9941 • 641-2795

MALE/FEMALE

Acctg Clerk Liason Off Mktg Asst/Driver 9115997

FREE CAREGIVER TRAINING PROGRAM W/CERTIFICATE 4043528 5212773 5899958

RUSH SALE !!!

Concrete Mixing Plant 60 & 120 M3/HR
Mobile Cranes 300T-20T, Lorry Cranes 15T-5T
Tractor Heads 420HP, 80T Boggie trailer
Wheel Loader, 9 Tire Roller, 1T Vibrating Roller
10Ton Cargo Truck, 10,000LWater Truck
Generators 15-500KVA, Tower Lights 6 KW,
External Vibrator set (Wacker) and many more.
Also available are industrial tools & equipment.
All 1997 Model Call 0917-5249650 Mr. Chiu
E-Mail: rseachiu @ pacific.net.ph

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

-Cook(capable for big volume) -nutritionist (2yrs. exp.) - dining supervisor(HRM grad) -cashiers -counter girls/boys -washer -baker -japanese cook -pantry/food dispatcher -asst. cook/k. helper Apply asap : Hitachi, LTI, Sta Rosa-KNM Canteen 8435822 loc. 2223 or Takata Phils. LTI, Sta Rosa c/o Vicky 844-6284 or 049-5412961

Mktng. Ofc. Staff 09208062187

OFC MKTG AST 09203562010 IRA

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

S2 Lic. # 17316N99 of Dra. Marie Josephine M. Lim issued by DDB was lost last Jan.2003.
(PDI-Jan.26,Feb.2&9,2004)

PERSONAL

Thank You Holy Spirit
Fr. Earl and Jr. del Rosario

ERRATUM

In the ad of PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF CEBU published in this paper dated JANUARY 28, 2004 Re: Invitation to Apply for Eligibility & to Bid the address of Danlag-Garing Bridge should be at CONSOLACION, CEBU.

Bids & Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

(PDI - Feb. 2, 2004)

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WANT TO BE 1ST
We are looking for Professional Networkers who want to move to the **TOP.**
We are making Aggressive Deals Now.
Call: 844-7700
ask for J.Y.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Are you looking for biz opportunity? Do you want extra income? Call Jean at 0927-2135532 TODAY!!

RETIRE 2YRS 09189051567

SINGAPOREAN looking for partners to develop new industry with patented technology 0927-4236266

TRADE-IN OLD COMPUTERS Call 952-7466/953-1192

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW HOW TO OWN YOUR OWN BUSINESS FOR LESS THAN P4,900 AND EARN P30-50K/mo. in 90 days?
Come to a **FREE** SEMINAR at:
Room 502, 5F Floor, Robinson's Galleria Corp. Center
Mon. & Thurs. 7 p.m.
Sat. 3 p.m.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Work By Phone, Earn Up 2 P30T/month! College Grad. 892-7828

NOTICE OF LOSS
Certificate of recognition as Filipino Citizen issued to ANGEL D. YOSUICO JR. for his children THALIA MARIA, ANNE LOUISE, and ANDREW, by the Bureau of immigration.
Contact 0916-6597781 if found.

ON-LINE

www.henrybutcher.com

ON-LINE AUCTION SALE

UNUSED CHEMICALS

Location: ATSI Warehouse, Batangas City, Philippines

Assets includes: -
Claus Catalyst (10.4 Cubic Meters)
Titanium Dioxide (3.6 Cubic Meters)
Carbon Activated (5.0 Cubic Meters)
UOP Molecular Sieve Type 3A (145 Cubic Meters)
Activated Carbon (188 x 25 KG Bags)
Zinc Oxide (38 x 50 KG Bags)
Aluminium Hydroxide (18 Cubic Meters)
Ceramic Balls 1/4" (2.9 Cubic Meters),
Ceramic Balls 1/2" (15 Cubic Meters)
Ceramic Balls 1" (19.5 Cubic Meters)

Closing Date: Wednesday, 4 February 2004 - 6:00PM
Viewing is strictly by Appointment
For more details please contact Mr. Arvin Cortez - Tel: 852 2910

HENRY BUTCHER
GoIndustry INDUSTRIAL ASSET DISPOSAL & VALUATION

HENRY BUTCHER INTERNATIONAL PHILIPPINES INC.
Rm. 103 Jollibee Bldg., 670 Edsa, Pasay City, Philippines
Tel No.: +(63-2) 852-2910 * 11 Fax No.: +(63-2) 831-9807
E-mail:manila@henrybutcher.com
Website: www.henrybutcher.com/www.goindustry.com

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Roads to Apply for Eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Asphalting of Ombudsman & PEO Access Road and Parking Areas, D.A. Compound, M. Velez Street, Cebu City, charged against the Continuing Appropriation for 20% Development Fund, Land and Land Improvement Outlay 1999 under PR # 04-38 dated 01-06-04 and Alobs # 100-04-01-569 dated 01-22-04 with an Approved Budget of P1,995,231.02.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

Major Items of Work Involved

Item 207 - Aggregate Base Course (150mm thick)
Item 310 - Bit. Conc. Surface Course (Hot Laid, 50mm thick)

Minimum Equipment Requirements:

Equipment Type	Quantity	
Payloader, 2.5 cu.m.	1 unit	Owned
Dump Truck, (10T-20T)	2 units	Owned
Grader, 135HP	1 unit	Owned
Road Roller Vibratory, 80 HP	1 unit	Owned
Water Truck w/ Pump, 10 cu.m.	1 unit	Owned
Asphalt Distributor, 300 gals.	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Asphalt Paver	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Pneumatic Road Roller	1 unit	Owned
Tandem Road Roller	1 unit	Owned

Schedule for the Procurement Activities:

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Jan. 26, 2004 Feb. 02, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents	Feb. 06, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Notice of Eligibility Bidders	Feb. 13, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Plans and Bid document	Feb. 16, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 19, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Public Bidding	March 02, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat

Only Bids within the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents can be obtained from the office of BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P2,500.00.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act under Rule VIII Section 23.6.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614/253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26 & Feb. 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Bridges to Apply for Eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Construction of Balungag Prestressed Girder Bridge, San Fernando, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation for 20% Development Fund, Highways, Roads and Bridges 2001 under PR # 04-230 dated 01-16-04 and Alobs # 00-04-01-387 dated 01-16-04, with an Approved Budget of P6,141,400.03.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

Major Items of Work Involved

Item 400-13 - Precast Reinforced Concrete Piles
Item 404 - Reinforcing Steel Bars
Item 405-A - Structural Concrete Class "A"
Item 406 (1a) - Prestressed Structural Concrete Girders (30m)
Item 505 - Stone Masonry, 300mm Thick

Minimum Equipment Requirements:

Equipment Type	Quantity	
Crane, 40-Tonner	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Diesel Pile Hammer	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Backhoe	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Water Truck w/ Pump	1 unit	Owned
Concrete Mixer - 1 bagger	2 units	Owned
Concrete Vibrator	2 units	Owned
Bar Cutter, 36mm dia.	1 unit	Owned
Plate Compactor	1 unit	Owned
Dumptruck	2 units	Owned
Payloader	1 unit	Owned

Schedule for the Procurement Activities:

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Jan. 26, 2004 Feb. 02, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents	Feb. 06, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Notice to Eligible Bidders	Feb. 13, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Plans and Bid documents	Feb. 16, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 19, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Public Bidding	March 02, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat

Only Bids within the Approved Budget of Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents can be obtained from the office of BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P4,000.00.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act under Rule VIII Section 23.6.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614/253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26 & Feb. 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Bridges to Apply for Eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Construction of Tubod Prestressed Girder Bridge, San Fernando, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation for 20% Development Fund, Highways, Roads and Bridges 2001 under PR # 04-231 dated 01-16-04 and Alobs # 00-04-01-389 dated 01-16-04, with an Approved Budget of P5,976,288.15.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

Major Items of Work Involved

Item 400-13 - Precast Reinforced Concrete Piles
Item 404 - Reinforcing Steel Bars
Item 405-A - Structural Concrete Class "A"
Item 406 - Prestressed Structural Concrete Girders
Item 505 - Stone Masonry, 300mm Thick

Minimum Equipment Requirements:

Equipment Type	Quantity	
Crane, 40-Tonner	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Diesel Pile Hammer	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Backhoe	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Water Truck w/ Pump	1 unit	Owned
Concrete Mixer - 1 bagger	2 units	Owned
Concrete Vibrator	2 units	Owned
Bar Cutter, 36mm dia.	1 unit	Owned
Plate Compactor	1 unit	Owned
Dumptruck	2 units	Owned
Payloader	1 unit	Owned

Schedule for the Procurement Activities:

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Jan. 26, 2004 Feb. 02, 2004	8:00 AM -. 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents	Feb. 06, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Notice to Eligibility Bidders	Feb. 13, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Plans and Bid documents	Feb. 16, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 19, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Public Bidding	March 02, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat

Only Bids within the Approved Budget of Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents can be obtained from the office of BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P4,000.00.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act under Rule VIII Section 23.6.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614/253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26 & Feb. 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Professional Regulation Commission, with address at P. Paredes cor. N. Reyes Sts. (formerly Morayta St.), Sampaloc, Manila, hereby invites interested bidders to apply for:

Items to Bid for 2004 requirements	Approved Budget for the Contract	Date/Venue of Pre-bid Conference	Non-Refundable Fee
Printing and Supply of Computerized Application Forms (CAF)	**P311,460.00** At P1.74 per sheet of imported Bookpaper O' At P1.96 per sheet of imported OCR paper (179,000 pcs.)	February 18, 2004 At 10:00 a.m. PRC Auditorium 5th Floor, Annex Bldg.	P1,000.00

Only bidders registered with the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) for procurement of goods shall be allowed to participate in the bidding process. Bidders may obtain the list of the registration requirements for procurement of goods at the **Office of the BAC Chairperson, Commissioner Leonor Tripon-Rosero, 2nd Floor, PRC Main Bldg.**, starting on February 3, 2004. Deadline for submission of registration requirements shall be at 5:00 p.m. on February 13, 2004. Issuance of Certification of registration to bidders for procurement of goods shall be on February 18, 2004 with a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.

Bid forms and the Terms of Reference (TOR), may be obtained by interested bidders starting on February 3, 2004 from the Office of the BAC Chairperson.

All particulars relative to the registration, eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids, and awards of contract shall be governed by the applicable provisions of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act (GPRA), and its implementing rules and regulations.

The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all bids or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, or to annul the bidding process at any time prior to contract award, to waive any required formality in the bids received or defects therein, or to accept such bid as may be considered most advantageous to the Commission, without giving any reason thereto and incurring any liability to the affected Bidder/s.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) **ANTONIETA FORTUNA-IBE**
Chairperson

(PDI - Feb. 2 & 9, 2004)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF BIDDING

The **National Food Authority (NFA)** wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Market Determined Pricing 115,000 MT (2.3-M BAGS) more or less US Long Grain Hard Mill White Rice (4% Brokens) under 2003 USPL 480 Title 1 Program at the following indicative price:

a. Ex-NFA Warehouse
Region III, IV and NCR-Php P18.90/kg or P945.00/bag

on **February 6, 2004** and **February 13, 2004** at 10:00 a.m. at the NFA Boardroom, 10th Floor, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and milling).
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-bidding, bidding proper and all activities thereto.

All interested bidders shall submit a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the total bid price in the form of Cashier's Check or Manager's Check from any reputable bank in Metro Manila.

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting **February 3, 2004** at DMO OCD, 5th Floor from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For any inquiries, please call tel. nos. **712-1572** and **712-1708**.

Bid documents will be available on **February 4, 2004** and **February 11, 2004** to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ARTHUR C. YAP**
Administrator

(PDI - Jan 31 & Feb 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Bridges to Apply for Eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Construction of Danlag - Garing Bridge (FS), Consolacion, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation for 20% Development Fund, Highways, Roads and Bridges 2001, under PR # 04-229 dated 01-16-04 and Alobs # 00-04-01-388 dated 01-16-04, with an Approved Budget of P1,856,276.09.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

Major Items of Work Involved

Item 400-13 - Precast Reinforced Concrete Piles
Item 404 - Reinforcing Steel Bars
Item 405-A - Structural Concrete Class "A"
Item 404-5 - Grouted Riprap, 300mm thick

Minimum Equipment Requirements:

Equipment Type	Quantity	
Crane, 40-Tonner	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Diesel Pile Hammer	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Backhoe	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Water Truck w/ Pump	1 unit	Owned
Concrete Mixer - 1 bagger	2 units	Owned
Concrete Vibrator	2 units	Owned
Bar Cutter, 36mm dia.	1 unit	Owned
Plate Compactor	1 unit	Owned
Dumptruck	2 units	Owned
Payloader	1 unit	Owned

Schedule for the Procurement Activities:

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Jan. 26, 2004 Feb. 02, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents	Feb. 06, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Notice to Eligible Bidders	Feb. 13, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Plans and Bid documents	Feb. 16, 2004	8.00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 19, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Public Bidding	March 02, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat

Only Bids within the Approved Budget of Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents can be obtained from the office of BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P2,500.00.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act under Rule VIII Section 23.6.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614/253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26 & Feb. 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Cebu
Bids and Awards Committee
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu through the BIDS and AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) invites qualified Contractors with minimum of "B" License and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as Medium "A" for Bridges to Apply for Eligibility and to submit sealed bids for the Construction of Dalingding Modular Steel Bridge, Libertad, Daanbantayan, Cebu, charged against the Continuing Appropriation, Austrian Assisted Presidents Program II - CY 2002 under PR # 04-36 dated 01-06-04 and Alobs # 100-04-01-131 dated 01-08-04, with an Approved Budget of P3,500,000.00.

Interested parties are requested to submit a Letter of Intent and updated documents to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), through the BAC Secretariat prior to the issuance of the Plans and Bid Documents.

Major Items of Work Involved

Item 104 - Embankment
Item 400-13 - Precast Reinforced Concrete Piles, 150 Tons
Item 404 - Reinforcing Steel Bars
Item 405-A - Structural Concrete Class "A"
Item 504 - Grouted Riprap, 300mm thick

Minimum Equipment Requirements:

Equipment Type	Quantity	
Crane, 20-Tonner	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Crane, 40-Tonner	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Diesel Pile Hammer	1 unit	Owned/Leased
Concrete Mixer - 1 bagger	2 units	Owned
Concrete Vibrator	1 unit	Owned
Bar Cutter, 28mm dia.	1 unit	Owned
Minor Tools.		

Schedule for the Procurement Activities:

	Dates	Time	Place
Submittal of Letter of Intent & Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Jan. 26, 2004 Feb. 02, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Deadline for submission of Eligibility Documents	Feb. 06, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Notice to Eligible Bidders	Feb. 13, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Issuance of Plans and Bid documents	Feb. 16, 2004	8:00 AM - 5:00 PM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 19, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat
Public Bidding	March 02, 2004	10:00 AM	PGSO, BAC Secretariat

Only Bids within the Approved Budget of Contract to be bid will be accepted.

Eligibility and Bid Forms, tender documents can be obtained from the office of BAC Secretariat, PGSO, DEP-ED Bldg., Cebu Capitol, Cebu City upon payment of non-refundable amount of P4,000.00.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act under Rule VIII Section 23.6.

The Bids and Awards Committee of the Province of Cebu reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defects or formality therein and to accept bids considered complying and most advantageous to the Government.

For more information please contact the BAC Secretariat at Tel. No. 253-9614/253-3981. This requirement is also posted at the PGSO Bulletin Board, DEP-ED Bldg., Capitol, Cebu City.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO T. HABIN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 26 & Feb. 2, 2004)

Your career might only be a click of the mouse away.

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*On his ninth death anniversary
we lovingly remember*

Enrique Munoz Razon

who passed away on 3 February 1995.

*Holy Mass will be offered on Tuesday
3 February 2004 at*

*Stella Maris Chapel
3F ICTSI Administration Building
Manila International Container Terminal
MICT South Access Road, Manila at 12:15 p.m.*

Other masses will be offered at:

*Malate Catholic Church
Our Lady of Remedies Parish
Malate, Manila at 7:00 a.m*

*Santuario de San Jose Parish
Greenhills East, San Juan
Metro Manila at 7:15 a.m.*

*Minor Basilica of the Immaculate Conception
Manila Metropolitan Cathedral
Intramuros, Manila at 7:30 a.m.*

*Nuestra Senora de Guia Parish
M.H. del Pilar St., Ermita, Manila at 7:30 a.m.*

*Santuario de San Antonio Parish
McKinley Road, Forbes Park
Makati City at 4:30 p.m.*

*St. John Bosco Parish
Arnaiz St., Makati City at 6:00 p.m.*

*Parish of St. James the Great
Ayala Alabang Village
Muntinlupa City at 6:30 p.m.*

Message of Thanks

RAJAH K. JAMALDIN,
AL-HADJ

*Our beloved PAPANG peacefully returned to ALLAH
on January 26, 2004 at the age of 62.*

His wife **Tessie**; children **John Jordan & Gina, Jo-Anne Cecilia & Dante, John Jerome & Tetchie**; grandchildren **Jules Rupert, Darren, Jessica Marie** and **Jeremy John**; siblings **Maccawi & Julpha, Faiga & Ibrahim, Yusuf & Linah** would like to thank relatives, friends and pious readers who helped, condoled and prayed with them through this most painful time.

Dra. Eugenia Naguiat
Lumanlan vda. de Henson

of Porac, Pampanga

Peacefully joined her Creator on January 31, 2004 at the age of 89.

Beloved wife of **Rosve Dizon Henson** (†); mother of **Merle, Jive & Fernando** (†) **Pineda, Edwin & Alba Hipolito, Reynold, Foster & Curina Maglalang**; grandmother of **Kay, Dyonne, Jehan, Pauline, Majonee** (†), **Tiffanee & Carmelo Lazatin Jr., Ivy & Nicole Tablante, Cyd & Jun Quizon, Wendy & Randy Montemayor, Rosve, John Reynold, Kim, Keena, Heidi, Via**; great grandmother of **Kercee, Kenchi, Keece, EJ** and **Kimo**.

Her remains lie in state at the Funeraria Angelina.

Interment will be on February 4, 2004 at the Holy Mary Memorial Park,
Angeles City after the 3:00 p.m. Mass.

Her family request relatives, friends and pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Please omit flowers.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave us His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." — John 3:16

Dr. Florentino N. Santos, Sr.

*Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on January 31, 2004 at the age of 87.*

Widower of the late

Dra. Carmen Enverga Santos

His bereaved family

Children
**Boy, Arben, Bucks, Lea, Rene, Andrew
Susanne, Celda, John** (†), **Baba, Socorro** (†)

Grandchildren
**Marco, Carmen, Guia, Joey, Tara, Katrina, Francis
Franco, JB, Nikki, Paolo, Jem, Jonathan, James
Patrick, Miguel, Karla, AJ**

Great Grandchildren
Tamika, Nicolo, Joshua, Johann, Jacob

Brother & Sisters:
Tanacio, Asuncion (†), **Ursula** (†)

and

Ana

Other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains will be at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel
Magallanes Village, Makati City
Starting today, February 2, 2004 at 8:00 AM.

Interment will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2004 after the 4:00 PM Mass
at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church
Magallanes Village, Makati City.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
Rotary Club of Manila Medical Mission
will be highly appreciated.

The Board of Directors, Management and Staff

of the

SOUTHWEST MARITIME GROUP OF COMPANIES

deeply condole with its President and CEO, **Arben E. Santos**
and the other members of the family of

DR. FLORENTINO N. SANTOS, Sr.

who peacefully joined his Creator
on January 31, 2004 at the age of 87.

His remains lie in state at the
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Chapel
Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2004
after the 4:00 PM Mass
at St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Church
Magallanes Village, Makati City.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
Rotary Club of Manila Medical Mission
will be welcomed.

"The Lord is my strength and my shield in whom my heart trusted and found help. So my heart rejoices; with my song I praise my God..."

Psalm 28:7

DOLORFINO GUEVARA TACTACAN

of Marikina City and Quezon City
April 10, 1940 - January 31, 2004

In loving memory of a caring husband, a thoughtful son, a great father, and wonderful lolo. A devout catholic, who dedicated his life professing the word of God. He peacefully passed away in the morning of the 31st of January 2004.

His bereaved family, wife **RHODORA SANTOS**, mother **JULIANA**, sister **JULIETA**, brothers **DANILO** (†) and **ROBERTO** (†). His daughters and sons-in-law **JOEY & VICKY ESPIRITU, JOEY & DINA CASTRO, TETET TACTACAN, SOC & DOYEE TUMPALAN** and **MIKE & JULIE ROSE DEFENSOR**. His grandchildren **TIMI & MARIELLE, NINAY ESPIRITU, TED & DANIEL CASTRO, LANCE & PATITA TUMPALAN, MIKEE, MIGUEL, MICO** and **MICA DEFENSOR** and great grandchild **IÑIGO** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Christ The King Church at Green Meadows, Quezon City. Funeral Mass will be at Christ the King Church on February 4, 2004 (Wednesday) at 9:00 in the morning.

Cremation will follow at 2:00 p.m. at the Manila Memorial Park.

REV. FR. JOSÉ LAPID SAPLALA, MJ

Founding Member of the Missionaries of Jesus passed over to the Father's house on Saturday, 31 January 2004. He was 68 years old.

The Community of the Missionaries of Jesus, the Lapid-Saplala families, and his friends request the readers to pray for his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at the Chapel of Saint Scholastica's College, Leon Guinto St., Malate, Manila. During the wake, 1-3 February, the Holy Eucharist will be celebrated daily at 8:00 PM.

Interment will be on Wednesday, 4 February 2004, at the Holy Gardens Valley Memorial Park, Sumulong Highway, Antipolo City, following the Mass of the Resurrection at 9:00 AM in Saint Scholastica's.

In lieu of flowers, donations for the Marahan mission in the Archdiocese of Davao (c/o the Missionaries of Jesus) would be most welcome.

Son of Man, You called and we heard. In the spirit of your Mother's fiat, we place ourselves at the service of your mission. Send us where you will. Lord Jesus, we are your missionaries

---

God has called home
our beloved Papa

ROGELIO (Roger) R. DIZER

(May 3, 1935 - January 31, 2004)

His loving family, relatives and friends request the readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Shrine Mortuary Chapel at New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment (Cremation) will be on Saturday, February 7, 2004 at the Loyola, Marikina Cemetery after the 12:00 Noon Mass at the Mt. Carmel Shrine.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

— 2 Corinthians 5:8

In Loving Memory

SIMEON G. GRUTA

Peacefully joined his Creator
on January 31, 2004 at the age of 78.

His bereaved wife **Maria** and children **Roberto & Eilleen, Rafael, Cesar & Cristina, Vilma & Guilbert Llamado**; grandchildren **Carlo, Mark, Eira & Elliott** and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be on Tuesday, February 3, 2004,
3:00 p.m. at Himlayang Pilipino
Memorial Park.

NELIA MACAPAGAL PURIFICACION

of Cabanatuan City

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 31, 2004 at the age of 63.

Her bereaved husband **Basilio** and children **Raul, Arlene, Basilio Jr., & Leah**; brothers & sisters, children in-law **Elvira, Delfin & Mitos**, her grandchildren, relatives & friends request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Lumbang Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat, Inc. (inside Manila Memorial Park), Sucat, Parañaque City.

Cremation will be at 10:00 am on Wednesday, February 4, 2004 at the Manila Memorial Park Crematorium.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031, 715-1027
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San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
AUREA QUIOGUE FUNERAL HOMES
243 A.B. Fernandez Ave., Dagupan City, Pangasinan
Tels. (0785) 522-3451, 522-2128, (0917) 434-9976
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Tel. 732-0309, 732-1095
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad,
Mandaue City, Cebu;
Tels. 346-2543, 346-2601
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Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City, Tels. 231-0721, 231-3192
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Dinalupihan St., Manuguit, Manila
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26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City;
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Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602
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187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas;
Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024

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Tels. 890-3556; 899-8191
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Magallanes Village, Makati City;
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CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Naga City Government
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Naga City Government, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors who are duly registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility, and if found eligible, to bid for the following project:

Project Description	Location	Approved Budget for the Contract
1. Completion of the Naga City Coliseum	Naga City Central Business District II, Naga City	P55,600,000.00
2. Row Housing Project	Brgy. Lerma, Naga City	P7,000,000.00

Prospective bidders may get their eligibility requirements starting January 27, 2004 at the BAC Secretariat, City Planning and Development Office (CPDO), Naga City or download it from the city government website at www.naga.gov.ph.

Deadline for submission of the letter of intent and the eligibility requirements is on February 17, 2004. Bidding documents will be issued to eligible bidders from February 18-20, 2004 upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P3,000 per project to the City Treasurer's Office. Pre-bid conference is on March 5, 2004 at the Bicol Science and Technology Centrum (BSTC) Audio Visual Room, City Hall Compound, Naga City. Deadline for the submission of bids will be on March 22, 2004 and opening of bids will commence at 2 p.m. of the same day at the BSTC Audio Visual Room.

The City Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defects therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the city government. The City Government will not compensate or indemnify bidders for expenses incurred in the preparation of their bid.

(Sgd.) FRANCISCO DEOCAREZA
Chairman

(PDI--Jan. 26, Feb. 2, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
Municipality of Taytay
Palawan
OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MAYOR

NOTICE TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The MUNICIPALITY OF TAYTAY, PROVINCE OF PALAWAN invites prospective bidders to pre-qualify and to bid for the "EXCLUSIVE TO GATHER OR COLLECT EDIBLE BIRD'S NEST WITHIN THE JURISDICTION OF THIS MUNICIPALITY."

Minimum Bid Price = P2,500,000.00

Interested bidders may obtain information from the Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Taytay, Palawan from February 17 to 23, 2004 and secure bid documents upon payment of non-refundable fee of Two Hundred Fifty Pesos (P 250.00).

Pre-qualification of bidder conference will be on February 24, 2004 at the Office of the Municipal Mayor.

Dropping/Opening of Bids in the presence of the bidders will be on February 26, 2004 at 2:00 PM at the Session Hall of Sangguniang Bayan, Taytay, Palawan.

The MPBAC reserves the right to reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids, at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder(s) and to accept such bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ROBERTO V. RODRIGUEZ**
MPBAC - Chairman

(PDI--Feb. 2, 4 & 6, 2004)

UPLB Thespian Circle presents Moliere's The Miser

THE UP Los Baños Thespian Circle, now on its 14th year, presents Moliere's *The Miser* in an English version by George Graveley & Ian Maclean. It will be staged on February 3, 4 & 5, 3pm & 7pm at DL Umali Hall, UPLB, Laguna.

A universally acclaimed comedy by the 17th century Fresh playwright, *The Miser* tells of Harpagon (Anthony Jan Cabatic), an old man obsessed with money. His relations with his children, Cleante (Ralph Castillo) and Elise (Nica Oliquino), and bride-to-be, Mariane (Pamela Valera), are affected by his lust for wealth and his fear of having to part with his money. John Apanay is Valere, Elise's lover who disguises himself as the miser's steward to remain close to his beloved. Completing the cast is Paula Consul (Frosine), Kei Mamangun (La Fleche), Wilfred Villaroel (Jacques), Pipo Gonzales (Officer) & Carl Cordero (Simon/Anselme).

The Miser forms part of a string of classical plays the Thespian Circle (TC) has produced so far since TC's founding in 1990, namely, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, Gorky's *The Lower Depths*, Chehov's *The Boor*, and Sartre's *No Exit* which Inocencio directed last year.

For tickets and other inquiries, please text 09205860650 (Karen) or 09196772112 (Jerry).

Globe studying feasibility of number portability in RP

By Abigail L. Ho

AYALA-LED Globe Telecom Inc. is studying the feasibility of allowing subscribers to retain their phone numbers even when they change operators, a practice known as number porting.

Already being implemented in Hong Kong and the United States, number porting is gaining strong consumer support because it allows subscribers to keep phone numbers that have become already identified with them.

During Globe's investors briefing Friday, Globe president and chief executive Gerardo Ablaza Jr. said the carrier was starting to assess the impact of number porting on operators in countries that were already implementing it.

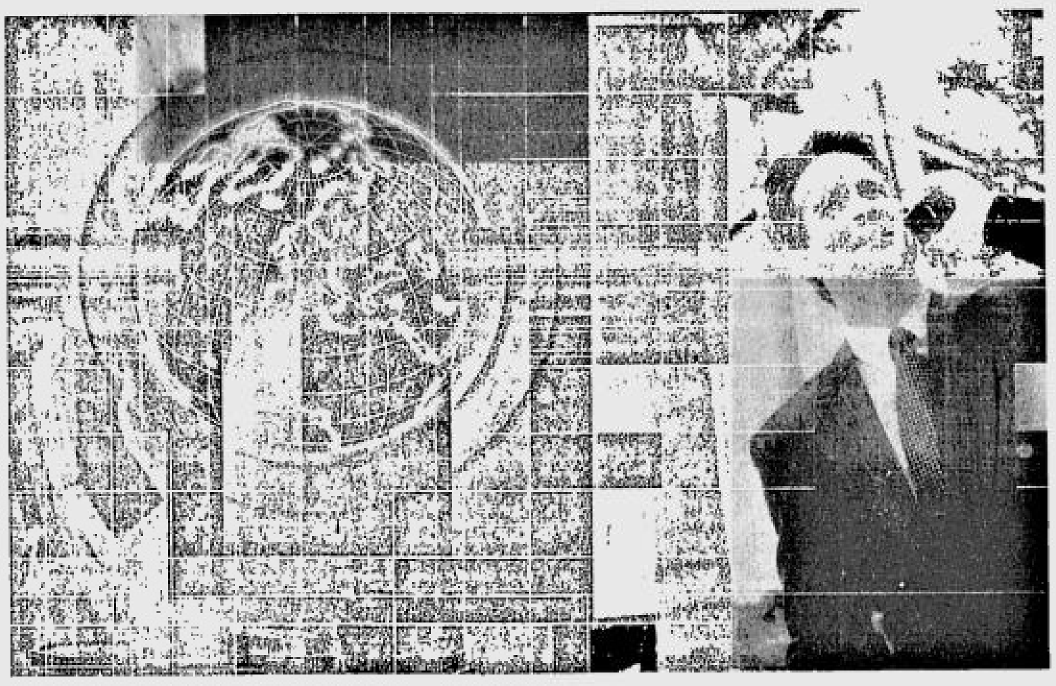
"We're looking into the different implications of number portability, not only on consumers but also on our network. We're studying the feasibility of implementing that on our network," he said.

He explained that, based on their study, mobile number portability had more of an impact on countries where the postpaid subscriber base was more dominant than its prepaid base.

Here in the Philippines, however, prepaid subscribers constitute 90 to 95 percent of the almost 22 million cellular subscribers.

Ablaza pointed out that the Philippine situation was a unique one in the sense that cellular subscribers here had virtually no loyalty to operators.

Many mobile phone subscribers here even maintain multiple numbers, holding on to more than one subscriber identification module (SIM) card.



NUMBER porting allows cellular phone subscribers to retain their existing mobile number even if they change operators.

"It's easier to change SIM cards here, so there isn't likely to be any highly disruptive transition if ever (we'll implement number portability)," Ablaza said.

The rationale behind number portability is that even if a mobile phone subscriber decides to employ the services of another operator, he does not have to lose his existing number.

This then, eliminates the hassle of having to inform all of his contacts about a change in mobile phone number due to a change in service provider.

The system has been in place in Hong Kong since 1999. The United States Federal Communications Commission has also recently approved the number portability scheme, despite an initial outcry from carriers.

However, Ablaza said there were no immediate plans to implement such a scheme in the Philippines.

Even then, Globe continues to review the matter so it can be better prepared if ever such a scheme materializes here.

"We're watching it, studying it. The impact is different depending on the market," he said.

Last month, the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) was urged by Congress to draw up new regulations that would allow cellular phone subscribers to keep their mobile phone numbers even when they switch to other mobile phone service providers.

Lawmakers initiated the call for the NTC to look into number porting, taking its cue from the United States.

The road won't be easy, though, for the NTC. In the case of the United States, the Federal Communications Commission was even sued by the United States Telecom Association to postpone the implementation of number porting.

In the end, however, the scheme was still implemented.

Mobile operators, users brace for SMS 'spam'

By Leo Magno

THE MOBILE phone industry is now the target of a nefarious activity which started out in the Internet—the dreaded "spam."

Spam is the nickname given to unwanted or unsolicited e-mail messages. These messages range from the deceiving (those which offer get-rich-quick schemes) to the ridiculous (those which offer breast or penis enlargement).

The Internet has been the only medium for spam until mass electronic marketers turned to the booming telecom sector. Their target: the cellular phone.

From the computer, spam has migrated to the mobile phone via SMS or text messages. There are about 1.5 billion mobile phone handsets currently in use globally. About 113 billion SMS messages were sent via mobile handsets around the world in 2003.

It is thus apparent why spammers have turned to the cellular phone. Text messages occupy a lot of traffic, and such traffic is good for promotional messages.

This prompted Philippine legislators to do something about the problem. Recently, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel introduced a bill seeking to prohibit cell phone operators from sending unsolicited materials to their subscribers.

Under the bill, operators engaged in unsolicited text messaging campaigns face a fine of up to P100,000 per violation. The mobile telephone operator's officials also face up to one month in prison on the fourth offense.

Rep. Joseph Santiago (NPC, Catanduanes), former chair of the National Telecommunications Commission, has endorsed the proposed bill.

"It's imperative for Congress to promptly take strong action against the proliferation of unwanted promotional messages, whether through SMS or e-mail," Santiago said in a statement.

Santiago said cellular operators "have no right to abuse and exploit their subscribers by swamping them with unwanted advertisements or promotions."

"These are abuses because subscribers are a captive audience who have no choice but to read uninvited messages," he said. "In the US, there's a new federal rule prohibiting spam. They've also banned unsolicited sales calls by telephone. There's no reason why we cannot adopt similar legislation here, particularly insofar as text messaging is concerned."

Santiago was referring to the "CAN-SPAM Act," which stands for Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing Act. US President George W. Bush signed the act into law last month.

People who flood the Internet with unsolicited adverts can be sued under the US legislation for damages of up to $2 million, an amount that can be tripled to $6 million for intentional violations. Spammers who send deceptive and in some cases pornographic messages could face jail terms.

The United States, however, is not yet training its sights on mobile phone spam. Mobile spam is now common in Europe and Japan, but text messaging in the United Sates is not as popular. Only about 20 percent of US cell phone users send or receive text messages.

Many users regard these unwanted text messages as more intrusive than conventional e-mail spam because incoming messages can cause phones to issue alerts during inopportune times.

But this pales in comparison to a bigger problem with SMS spam: the mobile operators themselves are the leading text spammers.

ICT Commission co-terminus with GMA?

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE COMMISSION on Information and Communications Technology (CICT) would likely cease to exist if President Macapagal-Arroyo does not win in the May elections, a government official said.

"The CICT is not the end. A real department of ICT is needed because if a new administration comes in, they could easily get rid of this body. This is just a short-term victory for the local industry," said Virgilio Peña, undersecretary for ICT of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), as he addressed members of the Philippine Computer Society.

Peña urged members of the society to continue lobbying for the creation of an ICT department, which is a more permanent institution.

"For now, we have overcome a major hurdle. We now have a new government body and a structure that would move ICT development forward in the Philippines," said Peña.

The CICT was created under Executive Order 269 signed by Ms Macapagal two weeks ago.

The CICT was created as an interim body to the pending Department of Information and Communications Technology, which has not been realized for years despite lobbying from various industry organizations in Congress.

The measure creating the ICT department has been shelved at the committee on transportation and communications of the House of Representatives.

Various representatives in Congress have proposed bills asking for the establishment of the ICT super agency since 1992.

Malacañang is expected to appoint the chair as well as two of the four commissioners under the new body in the next few weeks.

The interim ICT Commission would essentially merge into one body the National Computer Center (an agency attached to the Department of Science and Technology), the Telecommunications Office and the telecommunications planning division under the DOTC.

The National Telecommunications Commission and the Philippine Postal Corp. will also become agencies attached to the ICT Commission.

The current NCC chief and Philpost head will serve as two of the commissioners of the ICT Commission. The two other commissioners will be appointed by Malacañang.

The ICT Commission will run under the "existing budget of each agency" that will be merged under the new body, Peña said.

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From page B16

ever, attempts to block access to anti-virus websites, and converts infected computers to "bouncing points" for a denial-of-service attack on the website of SCO and Microsoft, Trendlab's Yaneza added.

Sophos noted in its website that "between 1 February and 1 March 2004, there is a 20-percent chance that the worm will attempt a denial of service attack against www.sco.com website."

The same kind of attack is scheduled for the Microsoft website on the same dates.

"It is designed to launch an attack against www.microsoft.com," said Mae Rivera, marketing communications manager of Microsoft Philippines, noting that the local subsidiary has been working to inform of its customers where they could get protection.

"Our support teams are on standby to help out customers who may encounter problems," she added.

Rivera said that none of the local customers have reported major problems due to the MyDoom.

Charles Cousins, managing director of Sophos Anti-Virus Asia, said that "no one could ever possibly know how many computers" were damaged worldwide by MyDoom.

"In the United Kingdom, our support staff have been very busy and have received several hundreds of calls. But in Asia we have received no reports," he said.

Cousins said that figures given out by anti-virus firms are just estimates of the actual infection.

AFP with Erwin Oliva

Official downplays Palace role in VoIP deregulation

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

A TOP information and communications technology official downplayed a report that Malacañang was behind the push to deregulate commercial voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) services in the Philippines.

In an interview, Virgilio Peña, undersecretary for ICT of the Department of Transportation and Communications, said that Malacañang would wait until the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) issues the new rules on VoIP after a public hearing is conducted sometime this month.

Peña, however, admitted that the Telephone Office (Telof) would eventually deploy VoIP services under the e-community center project of DOTC.

An industry source revealed earlier that Malacañang wants the government, particularly through the Telof, to offer this new technology as a cheap public telephone service, targeting relatives of overseas Filipino workers making frequent calls abroad.

Currently, the NTC permits only public telcos with a government communications franchise to offer commercial VoIP services.

The industry source said that suppliers are going to give a demo of VoIP in Malacañang next week, as the Palace prepares for deployment in Telof branches nationwide.

Asked to comment, Peña said that Malacañang is just "evaluating" these equipment.

Various stakeholders in the industry were given until Jan. 30 to submit their position on the latest VoIP rules. After all comments are collated, the NTC is tasked to discuss them at a public hearing.

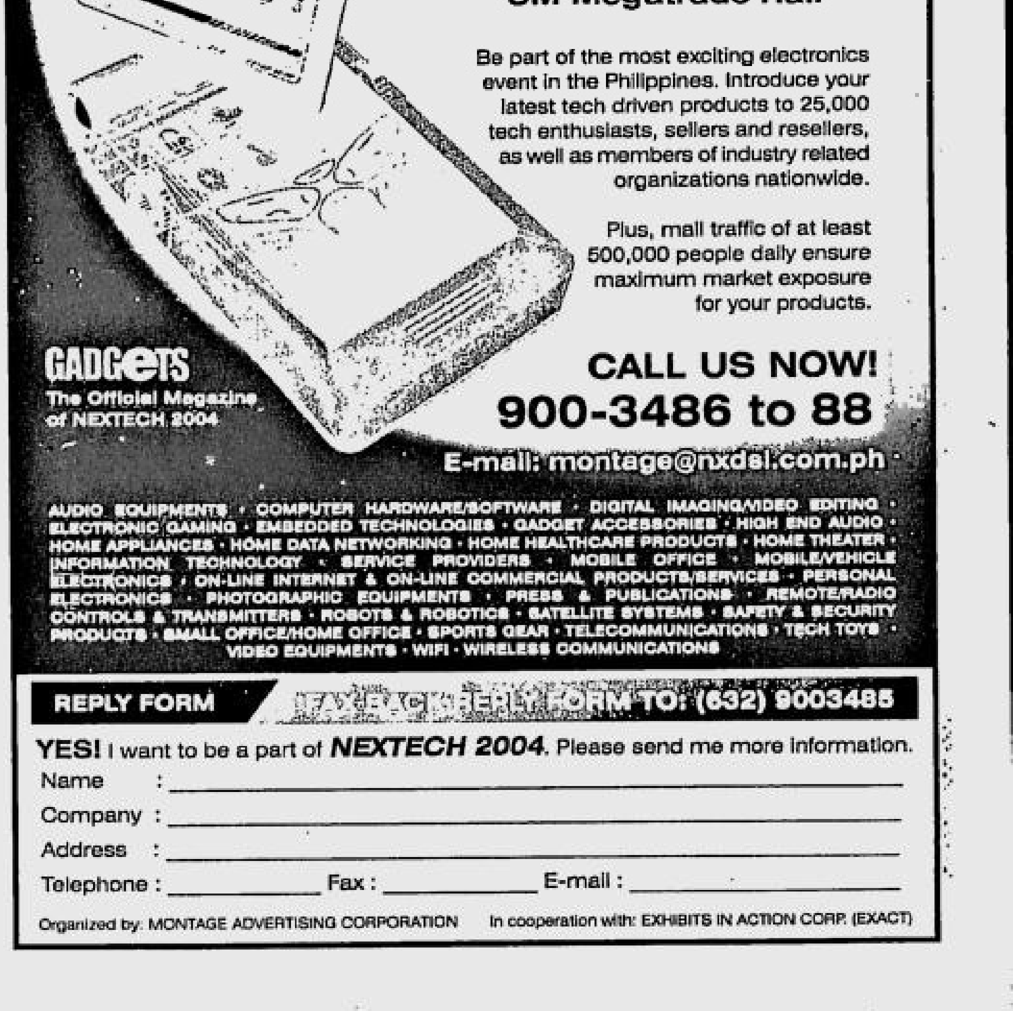
VoIP is a voice service that rides on the Internet infrastructure instead of on traditional public switched telephone networks. It recently has become a very popular alternative to traditional voice services since it provides cost-savings to enterprises, as well as to consumers.

Government rules allow private enterprises to use VoIP for non-commercial applications, such as private communication networks. However, Internet service providers or "value-added service providers" are still prohibited from offering commercial VoIP, the new rules said.

It is illegal for ISPs—which have been lobbying for the rules on VoIP—to offer it as a commercial service since it violates the country's Telecommunications Act.

Under a previous draft memorandum circular, ISPs must have a commercial agreement with authorized local exchange carriers before they could offer VoIP and that they must use international leased lines or circuits from authorized international gateway facility operators.

Today, the country's largest Internet café chain, Netopia, is offering VoIP calls to the United States and 30 other international destinations for only 10 US cents a minute. International long distance calls cost around 40 cents a minute. Netopia is a subsidiary of dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.



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Editor Leo Magno

Biggest virus outbreak hits Internet

THE MYDOOM computer virus has overtaken the "Sobig.F" bug as being the largest virus outbreak ever, after causing more than 100 million infected e-mail to be sent, security experts said.

"Looking at the amount of e-mail traffic, MyDoom has passed the Sobig.F virus as being the largest outbreak ever, which is quite historical," said Mikko Hyppoenen, head of anti-virus research at the Finnish group F-Secure. "Globally it has generated over 100 million infected e-mail."

The Sobig.F virus, which struck in August of 2003, infected millions of computers and caused over 300 million infected e-mail to be sent during its first week.

The MyDoom, or Novarg, virus outbreak started Monday last week.

Following the record-breaking number of outbreaks in 2003, Internet service providers (ISP) and computer technicians have become more efficient in their fight against the bugs.

"Companies and ISPs are filtering their e-mail traffic quite aggressively for infected mails, and most of the end-users will not see the problem at all, but it's affecting network traffic," he noted.

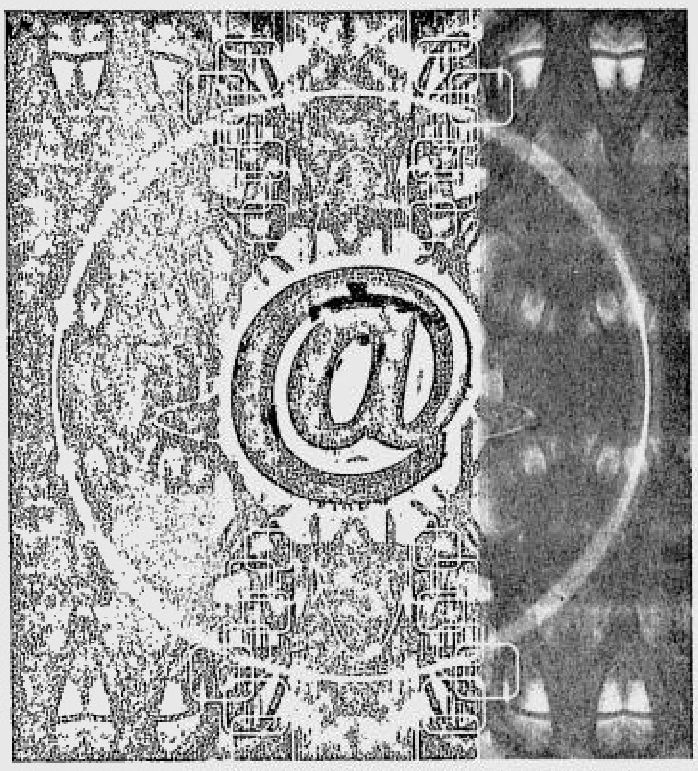
By early Wednesday last week it was believed that more than 500,000 computers had been infected around the world, Hyppoenen said.

In Moscow, a security firm said Russia was 80 percent likely to be the origin of the virus, and that it could be an attempt to distribute unsolicited e-mail or "spam." Russian security firm Kaspersky Labs said it had traced the first e-mail infected with MyDoom to addresses with Russian Internet service providers.

MyDoom spreads through e-mail attachments and downloads from the popular Kazaa file-sharing service, which lets Internet surfers share content such as games, movies and music with each other for free.

The MyDoom bugs are worms, a subgroup of computer viruses characterized by the fact that they spread independently through e-mail, Hyppoenen said.

"This is the fastest spreading worm in Internet history," said Scott Chasin, chief technology officer at MX Logic, a US-based security firm.



WHILE the bird flu was bugging Asia last week, the Internet was down with the biggest epidemic it has ever experienced. Again, e-mail is the global carrier of the virus, called MyDoom.

"It's apparent to us that even with the broad media and industry attention, e-mail users will continue to fall victim to the worm. It will be interesting to see what happens over the next few days, when the worm is expected to execute its denial-of-service payload."

Denial-of-service attacks are attempts to bombard networks with information requests in an effort to cause them to crash. The MyDoom bugs direct infected computers to bombard SCO, owner of a variant of the Unix operating system, and Microsoft Corp.

SCO has offered a $250,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and prosecution of MyDoom's creators. Microsoft on Thursday announced an identical measure, also offering a $250,000 reward for information to nab the culprits.

"This worm is a criminal attack," said Brad Smith, senior vice president and general counsel at Microsoft. "Its intent is to disrupt computer users, but also to keep them from getting to anti-virus locations and other sites that could help them. Microsoft wants to help the authorities catch this criminal."

The MyDoom bug's attack was twofold. MyDoom.A started it all, but a few days later MyDoom.B appeared. But unlike the first version of the MyDoom Internet worm, the new variant seemed to have fizzled out.

According to anti-virus firm Trend Micro, MyDoom.B was a "no show" and even did not cause much trouble compared to MyDoom.A.

"As for MyDoom.B, there appears to be problems with some of its functions to delete MyDoom.A and update it. There is at the moment one reported incident from the US according to our World Tracking Center. But there were lots of inquiries though," said Jaime Yaneza of the Global Anti-Virus Research Group at TrendLabs.

This new worm variant, how-

BIGGEST/B15

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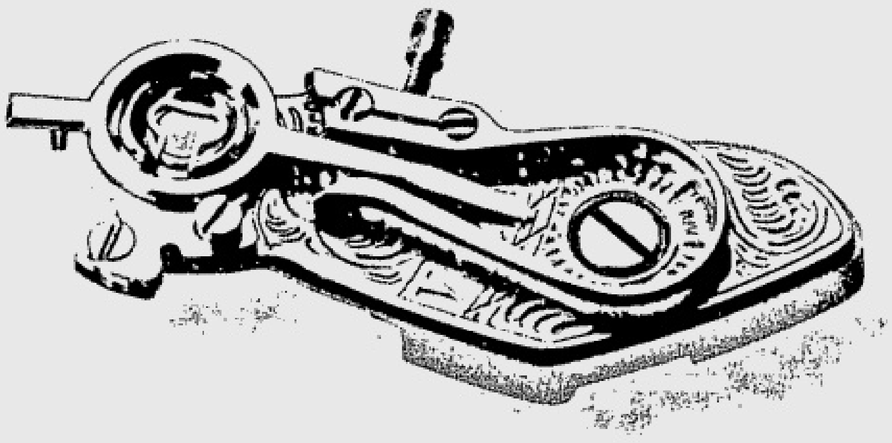

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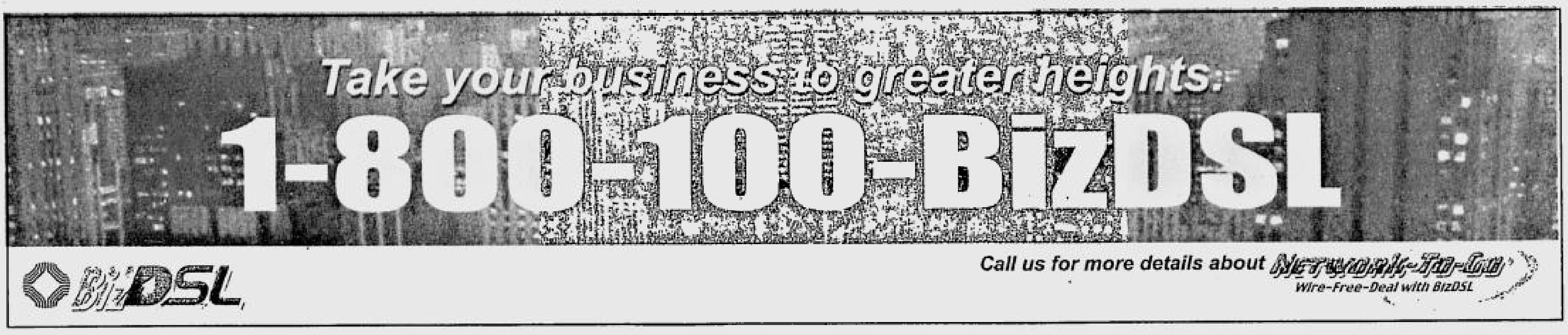

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Improve bottomline, boost staff morale

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co
Contributor, UP ISSI

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

ASK a prosperous businessman what made him successful, and he will likely point to his workers.

It is difficult for a business to thrive without a team of committed, dependable, and productive employees that have stuck with him through the peaks and downturns of the business.

If he is wise and insightful, this businessman might also tell you that people, strictly speaking, cannot be managed. Stocks, inventories, money, machines—these can all be managed and controlled. But people can only be led.

Key to leadership

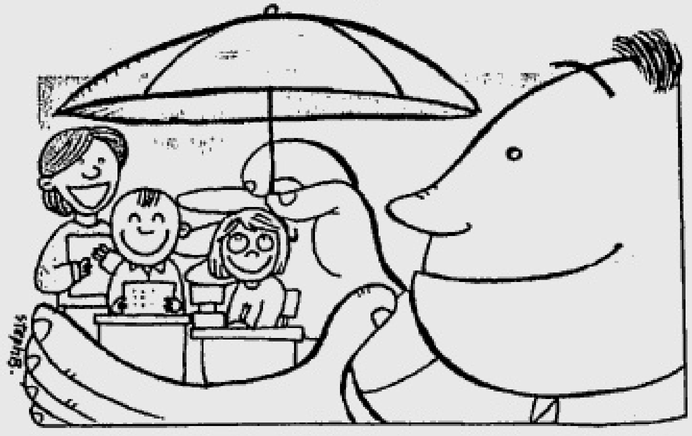
Managers principally handle bureaucratic stuff. They write business plans, set budgets and monitor progress. Leaders on the other hand, get organizations and people to change.

A key to good leadership is knowing how to keep people's morale high. Basically, morale refers to the way your employees feel about working for you and your business. It is important because it directly affects your bottom line.

The price of low morale in the workplace is high. It can result in low productivity, high turnover, and high tardiness and absenteeism rates among employees.

Motivating workers

Case studies done by the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries (UP Issi) reveal some of the ways small and medium entrepreneurs motivate their workers.



These include being transparent and consultative, setting up rewards and incentive systems like employee stock ownership and housing plans, treating them as extended family, and providing free food and flowing coffee.

Francisco Medina, Marikina shoe manufacturer, reveals that most of his people are seasonal workers. He usually lets them go during lean periods only to hire them back when production perks up. Most of them return to work every time he needs them, he says, because he treats them as family. He provides free food and flowing coffee, often joining them at lunch and merienda.

"*Kung ano ang kinakain naming maganak, kinakain nila.* (My staff eats the same food my family eats.)" He makes use of breaks to impart to them the importance of quality. "They understand why I am strict." I tell them: "*Kung walang* quality, *pupulutin kami sa kangkongan.*"

Kiko has also found that "*kung gumagawa ang isang tao nang masama ang loob, masama rin ang kalalabasan ng kanyang produkto.* (if a person works with negative feelings, his work will be adversely affected)"

Renato Pleno of Renaissance Ceramics in Cavite City, opened the ownership of the company to his regular employees through an employees stock ownership plan (Esop).

Having a stake in the company made them more loyal to it and concerned with its survival and growth. He also tries to be a consultative manager.

"Our people are very much aware of what is happening to the whole company and are always consulted on matters that affect them," Pleno asserts. This is how he has earned their trust. "Believe it or not, our employees have sometimes volunteered to defer government-mandated increases when they know our financial situation is poor."

Suzette Agustin, Bacolod-based handicraft entrepreneur, tries to get close to workers by attending their weddings, baptismals and birthday parties.

However, she avoids staying for meals.

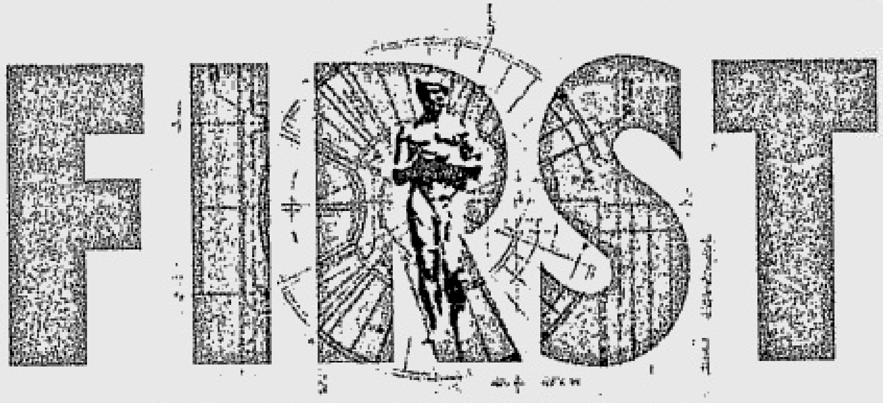
"They strain themselves trying to prepare food for me. So, I tell them I'd drop by to greet but not to eat." In turn, she throws a big party at yearend, where best workers, cleanest workplaces, and most punctual workstations are recognized.

Cecile Ramos, a jewelry maker in Meycauayan, Bulacan, shares that while she is strict with her workers and staff and brooks no inefficiencies, she is lavish in her praise of those who walk the extra mile. She gives rewards and incentives to the deserving and extends help to the needy.

Linda Guese, a furniture exporter in Pampanga, begins each workweek with bible reading and sharing sessions with her workers. Together, they pray, sing, praise and dedicate their work to the Lord.

She also has big plans to improve the lives of workers: a

IMPROVE/ B2-3



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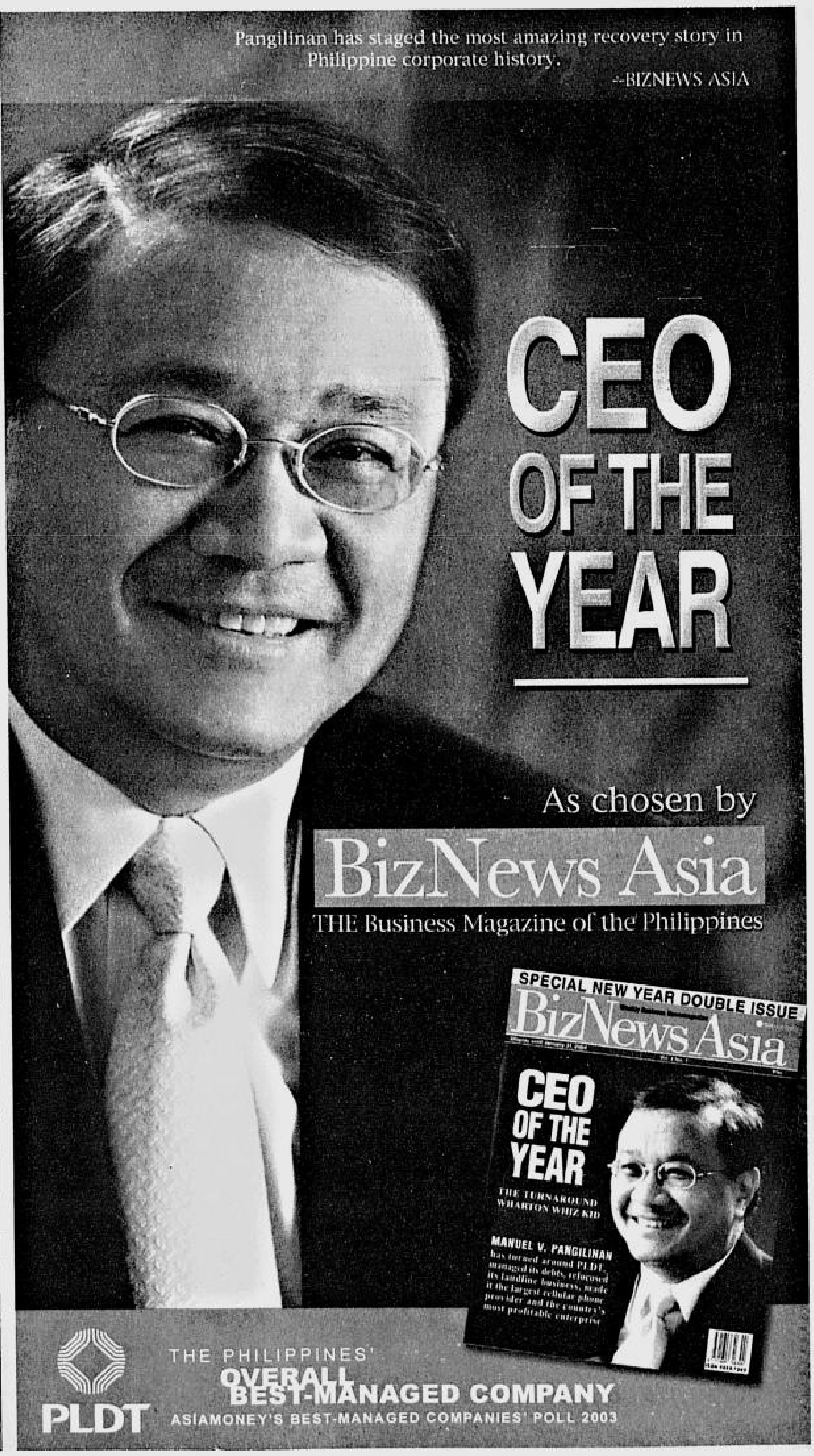
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Editor Aries Espinosa

Mirant to energize 500 more barangays nationwide

500 more barangays in remote countryside areas will have access to electricity in the next two years after Mirant Philippines Foundation committed to expand its existing rural electrification program.

The commitment was made to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during recent ceremonies where the President awarded Mirant a citation for the completed electrification of over 1,000 far-flung barangays all over the country under the energy firm's flagship Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) program, Project Beacon (Barangay Electrification Assistance for Countryside Development).

Project Beacon completed at a cost of over P1 billion is considered as the largest ever CSR program undertaken by a private institution.

"This is part of Mirant's continuing commitment to help government improve the quality of life of our countrymen and spark economic activity in the countryside by helping it meet its electrification targets," said Greggy Romualdez, public affairs manager, Mirant, on the commitment of the additional 500 barangays, which comprises the second phase of Project Beacon.

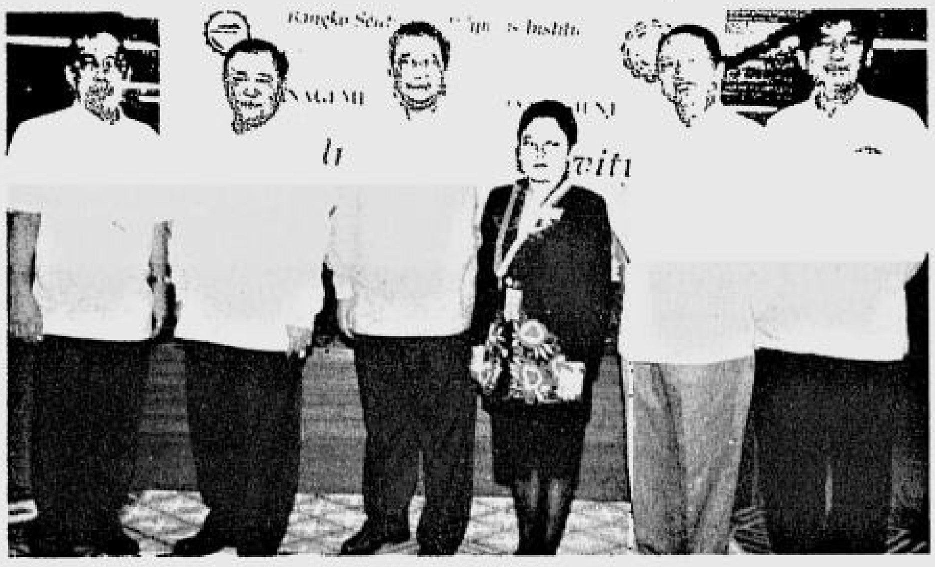
To be completed at a cost of P500 million, it will be undertaken in two phases, 300 barangays in 2004, and the remaining 200 in 2005. The project will be conducted in cooperation with the Department of Energy and the National Electrification Administration.

At present, an estimated 10 percent of the country's 41,955 barangays do not have access to electricity. The DOE targets full barangay electrification by 2006 under its O-ilaw program.

NEA will be tasked with identifying the beneficiary barangays. As with the first 1,000 electrified barangays, Mirant will install electric posts and transmission cables to make access to electricity possible in the remote barangays.

SHELL INAUGURATES 1ST BITUMEN FACILITY OUTSIDE LUZON

The Shell Villanueva Bitumen Import Storage and Distribution Facility, the first bitumen storage facility of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp outside Luzon, inaugurated Aug. 7 in Villanueva, Misamis Oriental. The P80-million bitumen depot includes a 4,000-metric-ton (MT) storage tank and a 150-MT day tank with a throughput capacity of 72,000 MT per annum. Located 23 km away from the booming city of Cagayan de Oro, the storage facility will serve the asphalt requirements of Mindanao and key areas of the Visayas. It will offer hot bulk bitumen to asphalt batching plant customers at relatively lower costs because of the resulting minimal reheating requirements. The facility was formally inaugurated with the opening of the commemorative plate led by (from left) Emerson Oliveros, Bitumen operations manager-Philippines, Edgar Chua, local senior oil representative and vice president for corporate affairs, Juliet Uy, wife of Villanueva, Misamis Oriental Mayor Julio Uy (beside her), and Calvin Acot, Assistant Provincial Administrator of the Province of Misamis Oriental.



DLSU-GSB, BSPI RECOGNIZE EMPLOYEES

The De La Salle University Professional Schools Inc Graduate School of Business (DLSU PSI-GSB), in partnership with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Institute (BPSI) recently honored six batches of BSP employees who underwent the Management Skills Enhancement Program I. The program is aimed to empower BSP employees holding key management positions in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in a productive manner. Because of the success of the first program, more training modules will be planned to continuously give BSP employees relevant tools and knowledge in running their respective departments. Shown, from left, are supervision and examination department IV director lawyer Wilfredo B. Domong-ong, supervision and examination sector deputy governor Alberto V. Reyes, BSP Monetary Board member Vicente B. Valdepeñas, bank officer III and academic achievement gold medallist Celedina P. Garbosa, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura and DLSU-GSB dean Philip E. Jurico.

MANELS OPENS DOORS IN ORTIGAS

Celebrating 40 years of unmatched quality in leathergoods, Manels recently opened its doors to the corporate market with its newest branch in the Ortigas Business District. Its grand opening and blessing day Sept. 26 was graced by, from left, comedienne Giselle Sanchez, Manels SOM Batchie Reyes, Manels image model Aliya Parcs, Sareena Rocco-Pengco, Pasig City Vice Mayor Lorna Bernardo and Manels president Nelia V. Siggaoat. Located at the ground floor of Raffles Tower along Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Manels accommodates the needs of corporate people.

Product FILES

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Much ado about Munchy's

THE MOST critical part of children's diet comes during their school time. At school, kids are usually exposed to several eye-catching, good-tasting yet nutritionally deficient snacks like junk foods. They, as kids, only go for the taste and the attractive packaging. Most of the time, parents fail to monitor what their children eat since they can't look on them all the time. As a result, there is a greater chance that kids would suffer from nutrition deficiency brought about by preservatives and additives found in junk foods.

Undeniably, some nutritious snacks are as tasteless as porridge and lack in variety, making it difficult for kids to even finish the snack.

Munchy Food Industries Sdn Bhd, through Gardenia Bakeries Philippines, gives you all the more reason not to miss kids' cravings for snacks. A new, exciting and totally nutritious and delicious product to boost kids' lunch box is available in the market today. Three healthy alternatives are introduced imported from Malaysia-Munchy's Rice Kids Wafer Bars, Lexus Sandwich and Music Wafer.

Gakken distributes world's most portable projector

GAKKEN (Philippines) Inc, the exclusive distributor of PLUS Vision Corp Projectors, recently introduced the PLUS V Series, which the company says are the world's most portable projectors.

With the smallest model weighing in at approximately 0.9 kg, the PLUS V Series are half the size of conventional projectors. "In an age where mobility is increasingly becoming a business advantage, we believe that a lightweight and compact projector you can hold in one hand is the ideal, indeed practical, solution for effective onsite presentations," said Gakken president Carlos D. Malibiran.

Digital Light Processing, or DLP, technology makes the compact size of the V-807 and V-1100 projectors feasible. DLP is a display solution developed by Texas Instruments that uses an optical semiconductor to manipulate light digitally. According to Malibiran, "this chip is the world's most sophisticated light switch and can modulate light much more quickly than other display components, allowing for projection subsystems that are smaller and lighter. It's a revolutionary technology."

Functionality is not compromised by the reduced size, Malibiran said. "DLP technology comes closer than any other display solution to reproducing the exact mirror image of its source material. DLP projection systems create a seamless digital picture that's sharp at any size-without the pixellation effect apparent in other technologies. Also, being mirror-based, the projectors use light more efficiently and bring more light from lamp to screen. This makes high-impact presentations possible even in brightly lit rooms." The PLUS V-807 projector, at 0.9 kg, offers brightness of 800 Ansi lumens and a contrast ratio of 800:1, while the V-1100, at 1 kg, offers brightness of 1000 Ansi lumens and a contrast ratio of 2000:1.

The V Series also boast of a short focus lens that allows large-screen, 60-inch projections at a range of only two meters, making it possible to deliver effective presentations even in limited spaces. The projector's picture-in-picture feature allows two images to be displayed simultaneously, one on a smaller screen within the current slide.

A unique PLUS feature is digital keystone correction, which compensates digitally for off-center projections so that the projected image is dimensionally true to the original. "This is really handy for presentations where you're not familiar with the venue because you don't have to make physical adjustments to their facility or try to physically move a screen. You just manipulate your projector digitally and effortlessly to correct distortions."

Professional Systems Synergy Inc (PSSI), a consulting company specializing in project management and project management training, recently invested in the V-807. "We make a couple of client presentations a week, so portability was a critical feature we looked for in a projector. Investing in the PLUS projector has enhanced our customer presentations and helps us deliver our consulting services more effectively and close more sales," said PSSI chief executive officer Vicente Romano III.

"The projector used to be treated as part of the bulky equipment you pack up at the end of the presentation together with the screen and the sound system and the banners. Now it's an accessory that you slip in your bag together with your laptop, PDA and mobile phone. It's an appendage of the mobile executive," said Malibiran.

Gakken Philippines Inc is the exclusive distributor of PLUS Vision Corp projectors, Japan's leading manufacturer of DLP projectors. It is also a leading supplier and system integrator of state-of-the-art quick print and in-house publishing solutions, representing such global brands as Duplo, ABDick, Graphic Whizard, SunRay, Technova Imaging Systems, Challenge and Autoprint.

INK FOR LESS ELEVATES SERVICE

The largest professional and number one ink-refilling station in the country today, Ink For Less, continuously focuses on providing cost-effective product solutions and excellent services to its growing client base. As part of its dedication to assuring total customer satisfaction, Ink For Less recently held a two-week training seminar for its employees in its more than 140 branches nationwide. Its highly efficient servicing and technical staff have just upgraded its skills a notch higher as Sean Amyot, head of the research and development and training department of Computer Business Works Inc of the United States, teaches valuable international practices in the technical side of ink-refilling. Dubbed 'A Comprehensive Technical Training on Quality Ink Refilling for Cartridges and Toners,' the activity benefited more than 400 employees of Ink For Less. Ink For Less is a one-stop-shop ink-refilling station that uses advanced and up-to-date technology and sources its ink from the United States and Singapore.

DIMSUM 'N DUMPLINGS TOMAS MORATO SIGNING

Prime Pacific Corp, the company behind Dimsum 'n Dumplings (D'nD), awards the franchise of D'nD Tomas Morato branch to Golden Mile Foods Corp. Shown during the franchise contract signing are (from left) Sandee Siytangco-Masigan, vice president, Prime Pacific Corp, Angie Eleazar, GM, Golden Mile Foods Corp, and Andrew Masigan, president, Prime Pacific Corp. D'nD Tomas Morato opened its doors October. The newly renovated Tomas Morato outlet has a new look, and bigger and better product line. For franchise inquiries, call 721-9695 to 98 or 723-4230, or e-mail ppc_acctg@vasia.com or dnd@vasia.com.

Aromatherapy seminars for easy profits

DISCOVER the art and science of aromatherapy through hands-on workshop/seminars by Chemworld Fragrance Institute, a division of Chemworld Marketing Corporation--one of the largest importers of personal and household care ingredients in the Philippines.

The Aromatherapy Seminars are slated on the following dates: (Saturdays, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) - Feb. 28 and March 27; (Tuesdays, from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.) - February 17 and March 16.

The workshop/seminars will be held at the Training Room of the Chemworld/Godiva office, 5th Floor Oppen Building, 349 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. Investment is only P1,000, inclusive of handbook and aromatherapy kit. For more details and inquiries about discounts for groups of three or more, contact Catherine Alfalfara at 890-9844 to 47 local 14/38, 0917-8736547, 0917-8736548 or 0916-6902280.

The Aromatherapy Seminar is in line with Chemworld's thrust in promoting livelihood training in the personal and household care industries. It teaches participants the art and science of using oils from aromatic plants to enhance an individual's over-all health and beauty. Hobbyists and those interested in putting up spas or health and beauty shops will be taught how to make popular aromatherapy oils, including their specific applications in scented candles, ceramic pots/jars, and aroma lamps among others, or as massage oils.

Raw materials such as fragrance oils, bottles and other supplies needed to start a hobby or small business are also available at discounted prices.

MOVEMENTS

AXA Life prexy is new Plia head

QUISUMBING

PHILIPPINE AXA Life president and chief executive officer Victor P. Quisumbing has been elected as the 2004 president of the Philippine Insurance Association (Plia). Quisumbing will take the reins from outgoing Plia president Jose L. Cuisia Jr.

"Being an election year, I think the thrust for 2004 should be about weathering change. Though it is often a usual reaction for people to resist and abhor change, I believe we should use it as an avenue for improvement, as we strive to fulfill our mandate to provide financial protection to the Filipino family and be a worthy contributor to our country's economic progress," Quisumbing said.

Joining Quisumbing at the helm are lawyer Ignacio A. Macrohon Jr., of Country Bankers Life (vice president), Marianne H. Crisol of New York Life (secretary) and Armando Trinidad of Fortune Life (treasurer). The board of directors includes Ma. Sharon B. Maranan of Generali Filipinas Life, Mr. Eulogio A. Mendoza of Asianlife and General Assurance, Mayo Jose B. Ongsingco of Insular Life, lawyer Adelita Vergel de Dios of Grepalige and Akira Yazawa of Sony Life.

Plia is a 36-member organization of the country's top life insurance companies.

UCPB bares new appointees

FAMATIGAN

UCPB announced the appointment of veteran bankers Herminio M. Famatigan as senior vice president and head of Consumer Banking Group and Aristides S. Armas as president of the banks wholly owned subsidiary UCPB Leasing and Finance Corp.

The bank also hired lawyer Edgardo R. Balbin as first vice president and head of Legal Services Division.

Famatigan has been in banking and finance for 23 years. He has extensive experience in corporate and branch banking, leasing, credit card business, and consumer lending. Prior to joining UCPB, he was Division Head for Metro Manila branches and Private Banking in RCBC. He was EVP and COO of Solid Bank Credit Card Corp.

Famatigan holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Economics from the University of the Philippines.

Armas has 32 years of banking experience. He started his career as an accountofficer in Citibank's Personal Banking Group and later on in its Commercial Banking Group. He moved to First Metro Investment to head the Marketing/Lending Group, and then transferred to BA Finance Corp. to head the Consumer Financing Group before becoming the head of the Branches Division. He joined the UCPB Group in 1987.

Prior to his appointment to UCPB Leasing, he headed the bank's Strategy Management Department. Armas holds a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Science in Commerce degrees from De La Salle University.

Balbin has been practicing law for 26 years. Shortly after passing the bar examinations, he joined the Department of Natural Resources (now the Department of Environment and Natural Resources) first as a trial attorney and then as a senior legal officer. He moved to the Philippine Commercial International Bank (now Equitable-PCI Bank) where he started out as documentation lawyer and rose to become head of the bank's Legal Services Division. After 14 years in the bank, he joined Bayan Telecommunications Inc. as vice president and head of the company's Legal and Regulatory Affairs. Balbin holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines.

Samsung exec voted best manager

YUN

SAMSUNG Electronics chief executive Yun Jong Yong was named as one of the best managers of 2003 by America's leading business news magazine BusinessWeek.

In its special report of the best (and worst) managers, BusinessWeek recognized Yun for making the South Korean electronics giant "one of the world's fastest-growing brands."

Yun has been with Samsung for 37 years and was named chief executive in 1997 for his ability to salvage the company from massive losses due to falling prices of computer chips, one of the major products of Samsung.

Through Yun's leadership and radical policies, Samsung was able to tighten its grip on the memory-chip business by claiming almost two-thirds of the market for NAND flash memory, used mainly for storing large music and image files. Samsung also dislodged Motorola by becoming the second largest maker of cell phones in terms of value, although it occupies the third spot in volume.

New CCBPI president named

HUANG

THE BOARD of directors of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. (CCBPI) has appointed as new president Roberto N. Huang, succeeding Genaro V. Lapez.

Huang, corporate sales director of San Miguel Corp. (SMC) prior to this appointment, served in various managerial capacities in SMC's sales and marketing organization. He started out as national sales manager for beer and later promoted to sales and marketing manager for San Miguel Beer Philippines and later for the entire San Miguel Beer division. As corporate sales director, he oversaw sales operations for SMC's beverage products, including liquor, as well as those for food products.

A licensed mechanical engineer, Huang, 55, graduated from the Mapua Institute of Technology and completed the academic requirements of his Masters in Business Administration at De La Salle University. He has close to 30 years of working experience prior to joining SMC, including management of business and industrial companies and several years of teaching in the academe.

Improve bottomline, boost . . .

From page B2-1

housing project and a cooperative.

Building rapport

There are countless other ways entrepreneurs and managers can earn the trust and build rapport with their people and in turn raise morale and increase productivity. Entrepreneur.com gives some tips:

1. The start of the day is a great time to demonstrate high levels of enthusiasm for the new work day. Go out of your way to greet your employees. Deliver compliments early in the day to put them in a positive frame of mind as they face their day.

2. Give your employees lots of opportunities to see you frequently throughout the day. Walk around the company with a smile on your face.

3. Celebrate victories. Set small and attainable goals every so many weeks or months to give your employees tasks worth striving for. Don't wait until you complete a big project to congratulate the people involved. Treat them to victory cakes, *pancit*, soft drinks, etc.

4. Encourage order. Every few months, give your employees a couple of hours to clean their desks and files and do minor repairs on computers and other equipment. Let them know you care about their working conditions and stress levels.

5. When the afternoon slump hits, take a walk around the office and ask people: "How is it going?" This is the time everyone needs a quick lift.

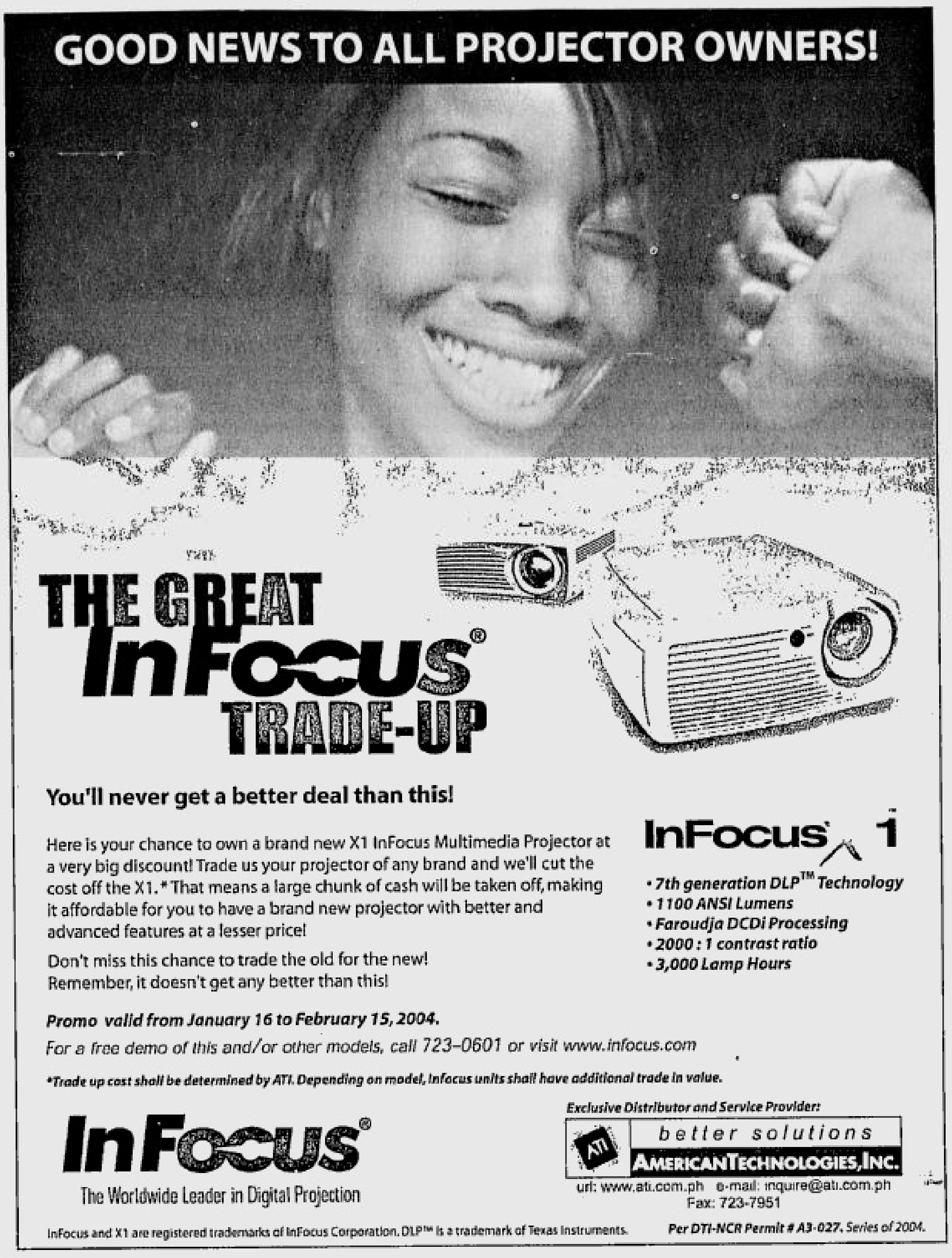
6. Use suggestion boxes, newsletters and bulletin boards to encourage employees to give feedback.

7. Encourage friendships among workers. People work best where there are friends around. You can encourage interaction in many ways. Organizing athletic meets, going on outings, and getting them to share their talents with each other—whether it is playing the guitar or making candles or learning another language—are some of them.

8. Hide your anger. If a worker does something annoying, don't yell. Call him to your office and let him know you're disappointed. Critique the behavior but don't criticize the person.

9. Show your humanity; laugh out loud easily and often.

(Improving employee morale is only one of the topics to be discussed in the "Productivity through Effective Supervision" seminar which will open on Feb. 7 at the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries. For inquiries, call Tes Santos at 928-7076 to 79 or e-mail info.issi@up.edu.ph.



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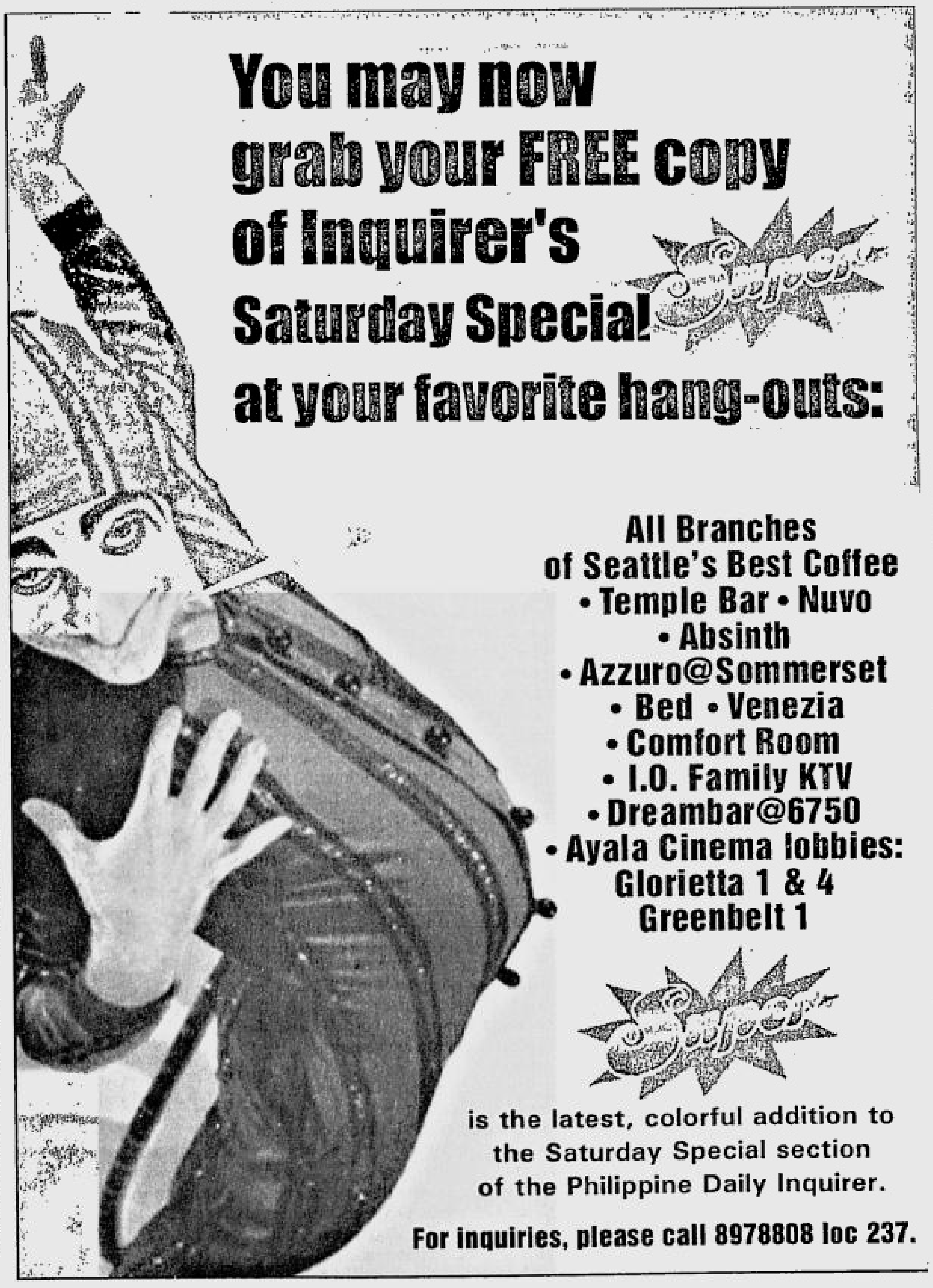

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BUSINESS Monday

Tips on good conversation skills

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: I have a female officemate, a fellow officer, who loves asking us pointed questions about our personal lives in public, such as during lunch. It is probably her way of getting close or showing interest, but it can be offensive. For example, she asks me and everyone: "Why did you break up?" or "How much did you pay for your house?" How do we handle such situations in public? Whenever she asks questions like that in private, I smile and simply say "I really don't want to talk about it" but then if I say that in public she may get offended.

A: Officemates sometimes do not know when to draw the line and personal questions should never be part of the conversation. Simply saying I'm uncomfortable discussing private matters should be an indication to her to stop asking. Never feel obliged to discuss your personal life just because you are asked a direct question. The same goes for salaries. If an officemate asks how much you are earning, do not feel obliged to tell him or her just because you are asked directly. Topics of conversation such as personal relationships, finances and other personal matters should be avoided.

Q: Could you please give me some basic tips on developing good conversation skills? I have to entertain clients a lot. Most of the time I take them out after office hours. I can converse well when it comes to work related topics, but outside of that I get really nervous and clam up. I feel like I might say the wrong things and they might think I'm nerdy or something like that. Can you help me out?

A: Thank you for your e-mail. Here are some tips that may help you out.

- Be well informed and be able to talk on a wide range of subjects. Read magazines, listen to the news, read the current best sellers, see the latest movies, etc.
- Stay informed on the major news happenings of the world.
- Maintain eye contact. Look at everyone in the table while you are speaking so that everyone will feel like they are included in the conversation.
- Listen to others; do not interrupt or finish another's statement.
- If you are uncomfortable starting a conversation, be a good listener and as the conversation moves on, agree or disagree with the subject matter and you will find yourself more comfortable.
- Be interested in what other people do for a living.
- Be able to flow from one topic to another with ease.
- Do not pretend to be an expert on topics that you are not. If there is a topic you are unfamiliar with, ask them to explain. They will be more than happy to do so and you learn a thing or two.
- Do not correct another's grammar or pronunciation in public.
- Gracefully accept any compliments given to you. Be liberal with your compliments but make sure they are genuine.
- Do not ask a professional for advice or information at a social function or casual meeting. Especially if there is a doctor or a lawyer in the group. Most professionals complain that they are constantly asked for advice.
- Be sensitive to a shy person within the group. Bring him or her into the conversation by asking questions.
- Keep the conversation flowing, trying to avoid an awkward silence.

Topics you should try to avoid:

1. Your health, or more importantly, your illness.
2. Another's health, or more importantly, his/her illness.
3. Sensitive topics such as religion, politics, etc.
4. Money
5. Tragedies
6. Gossip
7. Sex

Please email your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com. Names of senders will not be published.

Mobilizing business toward economic growth

MAPPING THE FUTURE

David Balangue

WITHOUT doubt, 2004 will be a significant year for the Philippines as we face the challenge of the forthcoming national elections that will determine our country's leadership in the next six years.

Regardless of the election results, we in the MAP will continue to pursue our mission.

Our theme for 2004 is "Mobilizing business toward economic growth." The theme is a dynamic one that, we hope, will set to motion our projects to help us realize our association's objectives. Allow me to share with you the reasons behind this theme.

Our country is currently confronted with a myriad of problems. Problems that need to be addressed and solved if our country is to move forward at a pace equal to or better than that of our neighbors.

One of the primary purposes of our association is to promote management excellence and to contribute to the practical solution of current business problems by promoting a broad exchange of management information and application of modern business methods and practices.

The current economic situation is causing numerous business problems. And if we in MAP are to address these problems, we need to strike at their primary root causes.

Left behind

Economic indicators in the region show that the Philippines is being left behind. China and Thailand have gotten their acts together. The longer we wait and not do anything concrete, the more we will fall behind. Statistics paint a bleak outlook.

In the 2003 World Competitiveness Yearbook, the Philippines ranked behind many of its Asian neighbors, except for Indonesia. Our country has slipped down the rankings from 12th in 1999 to 22nd in 2003.

Free and open trade is upon us and we have to be ready for it. The only option is to compete, not in all industries but only in those where we clearly have a competitive advantage. And we cannot do this alone. We need foreign direct investments (FDIs).

FDI flows to the Philippines from 1997 to 2002, a period of six years, amounted to only $8 billion or slightly over one percent of the $620 billion FDI that came to East Asia, with China accounting for $286 billion, which transformed China into an economic powerhouse.

Anemic level of FDIs

FDI will not come as long as the security and protection of such investments are not assured, the courts continue to make economic policy decisions, government does not honor its contracts, the physical safety and well-being of investors are at risk, the infrastructure is inadequate to support a growing economy and the level of corruption in government is high.

Foreign investors will come here—and may I add, stay, only if we can offer a better environment for them to produce their goods at competitive costs and with less uncertainty. Uncertainty is synonymous to risk.

The more uncertainty, in terms of legal framework, investment protection, security and safety, the reliability and availability of needed infrastructure and elements of production, the higher will be the risk of doing business here. And the lower the level of FDI will be.

To enjoy the benefits of liberalization, the country should be ready to adjust to a liberalizing and globalizing economy. The country needs to re-tool and adapt if it is to survive in a world of low tariffs and free trade.

This requires building the necessary capacities and infrastructure that we direly need to attain a balanced and equitable growth and sustainable development.

Three-level framework

This capacity building is a three-level framework that consists of institutional capacity building, organizational capacity building and human capacity building.

Institutional capacity addresses legal infrastructure, investment protection, peace and order, transportation and communications, energy, financial system, among others. Organizational capacity building takes care of the enhancement of the competitiveness of individual corporations and tapping the potential of SMEs and micro-enterprises.

Human capacity building will bring about support for SMEs and micro-enterprises through entrepreneurship development and upgrading of management skills as well as greater access to information and communication technology.

A comparison of the investment incentives offered by countries in the region clearly shows that those offered by the Philippines are at par if not better than most countries in the region. Thus, the anemic FDI levels in the country cannot be addressed by offering more incentives alone.

The country's image as an investment destination needs to be improved.

In its Corruption Perceptions Index 2003, Transparency International has placed the Philippines as the 11th most corrupt nation in the world.

In addition, therefore, to addressing the country's capacity building needs, we also need to address the high level of corruption in the government. Stamping out or minimizing corruption is possible.

This can be done—not through more laws that don't get implemented anyway—but through application of the basic concept of finance, the risk-reward equation. The rewards of corruption are high and the attendant risks are not. Those who steal hundreds of millions or billions of pesos from the government go scot-free.

This cannot continue.

The risks of corruption should be increased commensurate with the rewards. Those who steal should be jailed and not be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their corruption.

No to short memories

We cannot have short memories and simply forgive and forget all the scandals and corruption that we have seen in the past few years. These scandals cannot and should not be forgotten until all the guilty parties are brought to justice in a swift and decisive fashion.

Corruption affects us all, business in particular. It hampers the country's competitiveness since we incur costs that have no economic value from a global competition standpoint.

As leaders of the business community, we in MAP can no longer ignore and pay lip service to the corruption that is in our midst. We need to act, and it should be now, rather than later.

Economic growth is at a snail's pace compared to our neighbors and needs to be stimulated. Many of our citizens have adopted a wait-and-see attitude but, I believe, the waiting has taken too long and it is time for more action.

Thus, our theme "Mobilizing business toward economic growth" suggests that we bring together the business community and, in partnership with government, make things happen.

This year, I invite the general membership to be with the MAP when it stands up to be counted. Your 2004 board will mobilize the MAP membership to enable our association to push for economic growth by helping our government in building and strengthening our capacities as well as by helping eliminate corruption in the country.

In doing so, the MAP will be able to do its humble share in attracting FDIs that are essential to our country's economic growth and competitiveness.

(This article contains the inaugural address of the author as the 55th president of the Management Association of the Philippines. He is chair and managing partner of SyCip Gorres Velayo and Co. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

Demand grows for cheap irrigation solutions

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

ONE of the cures for Philippine poverty is found in common sense.

Consider this: When a field is not irrigated, the farmer has to rely purely on rain. But the rainy season lasts just a few months here. So the farmer is left idle for at least half the year, and this makes him dirt poor.

But irrigation hikes cropping intensity, i.e. it allows the farmer to plant many crops on the same field. With irrigation, rice yields reach three tons to even six tons per hectare per year.

Irrigation is thus a vital tool for lifting millions out of rural poverty.

Enormous backlog

But farmers face a great backlog in irrigation. The land that could be irrigated adds up to 4.66 million hectares. What was actually irrigated, according to a 2001 paper, was just around 30 percent of the total.

Worse, investments in irrigation have fallen steeply.

Back in the '70s and '80s, 25,000 hectares were irrigated every year. Then this rate fell to less than 10,000 hectares in the late '90s.

Add to this the problem of siltation. Over the years many systems have deteriorated or have become clogged.

The usual national irrigation systems are not designed for raising vegetables or cash crops. They are meant for growing rice: fields are continuously submerged in water, and drainage is minimal. Because farmers have little control over national irrigation systems, they are pushed to plant low-revenue rice.

Short on funds

The vital task of linking farms to water falls on the National Irrigation Authority (NIA). It is a government owned and controlled corporation tied to the Department of Agriculture.

NIA has been running into collection problems. In 1975 farmers paid the following fees for using diversion irrigation systems: two cavans of palay (unhusked rice) per hectare during the wet season and three cavans during the dry.

The prices were higher for getting water from reservoirs and for utilizing pumps. For example, a farmer using pumps would pay 5-12 cavans per hectare during summer.

But during the term of President Joseph Estrada, the rates were socialized. For example, for farms of 2 hectares or smaller, the fee was one cavan during the wet season and 1.5 cavans during the dry.

This change in 1998 resulted in a sharp cut in irrigation revenues. The fees covered just 60 percent of operation and maintenance costs.

Irrigation fees will have to be hiked to reflect the true irrigation costs. Restore them to at least 1975 levels. Even better, resort to "volumetric pricing:" charge according to how much water the farmer uses. That will lead to greater efficiency and will allow the NIA to recover its costs.

Rehabilitate first

Another solution to the backlog is to prioritize the repair of present systems. It is much cheaper to fix broken down irrigation systems than to build new ones. The cost of building a new national system ranges from P70,000 to P180,000 per hectare.

The cost of rehabilitating a clogged one is a mere P10,000 per hectare.

Government targets for 2001 to 2004 are ambitious. The aim is to rehabilitate 700,000 hectares and bring in another 350,000 hectares under new irrigation. That's four times the past record. So far, rehabilitated areas rose by 80 percent: from 293,800 in 1998 to 542,000 in 2003. New irrigated areas increased by 60 percent: from 40,800 to 66,000 hectares.

Then another solution opens up opportunities for business. Turn to the more appropriate technology of shallow tube wells and portable low-lift pumps. The nation has enough ground water for the wells, as 5.1 million hectares are suitable for this technology.

Tube wells and low-lift pumps also have very brief gestation periods—only two to 10 days, compared to even seven years for national gravity irrigation systems. They are much cheaper, at P5,000 to P20,000 per hectare, compared to more than P100,000 for national systems. They are easy to install and are often owned by the farmers themselves.

Private irrigation

Finally, NIA is now promoting the development of irrigation systems owned and operated by the farmers themselves. It seems that irrigation will land in more private hands.

According to NIA records, around 20 percent of irrigated areas are served by privately owned systems. But economist Cristina David gives a much higher figure. She believes that 650,000 hectares—two to three times NIA's estimates—are farmer owned.

The cheap technology of shallow tube wells may drive this trend. In fact firms have taken the lead where the technology has spread, like Regions 1, 2 and 3. For every shallow tube well set up by the government in 1997, the private sector has installed more than 10.

Business should look more into the farmers' growing demand for cheap irrigation. *Comments to darroyo@philonline.com*

MAP fetes Management Man and new prexy

AMBASSADOR Jesus P. Tambunting, chair and chief executive officer of Planters Development Bank, is the Management Man of the Year 2003.

The Management Man of the Year is a prestigious award that the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) bestows on individuals in the business community and the government, for attaining unquestioned distinction in the practice of management and for contributing to the country's progress.

The conferment of the award to Tambunting followed a thorough, stringent selection process. The distinction of Management Man of the Year has been conferred only 25 times in the 36-year history of the award.

Tambunting was chosen for steering Plantersbank to phenomenal growth—from a single office in 1972 to 70 branches nationwide today. With consolidated resources of over P30 billion and capital of P2.8 billion, Plantersbank is currently the 22nd largest bank in the Philippines.

Equally important, Tambunting was recognized for his role in heightening bilateral relations between the Philippines and the United Kingdom during his term as the country's ambassador to the Court of St. James from 1993 to 1998.

FORMER Finance Secretary Roberto F. de Ocampo and Management Man of the Year Jesus P. Tambunting PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLENA

FORMER presidential contender Santiago Dumlao and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel

JOSE L. Cuisia, Philamlife president

EDWARD Ferreira turns over the presidency to David Balangue.

MR and Ms Jose Mari Chan

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BUSINESS Monday

Tips on good conversation skills

GOODNESS GRACES

Lia S. Bernardo

Q: I have a female officemate, a fellow officer, who loves asking us pointed questions about our personal lives in public, such as during lunch. It is probably her way of getting close or showing interest, but it can be offensive. For example, she asks me and everyone: "Why did you break up?" or "How much did you pay for your house?" How do we handle such situations in public? Whenever she asks questions like that in private, I smile and simply say "I really don't want to talk about it" but then if I say that in public she may get offended.

A: Officemates sometimes do not know when to draw the line and personal questions should never be part of the conversation. Simply saying I'm uncomfortable discussing private matters should be an indication to her to stop asking. Never feel obliged to discuss your personal life just because you are asked a direct question. The same goes for salaries. If an officemate asks how much you are earning, do not feel obliged to tell him or her just because you are asked directly. Topics of conversation such as personal relationships, finances and other personal matters should be avoided.

Q: Could you please give me some basic tips on developing good conversation skills? I have to entertain clients a lot. Most of the time I take them out after office hours. I can converse well when it comes to work related topics, but outside of that I get really nervous and clam up. I feel like I might say the wrong things and they might think I'm nerdy or something like that. Can you help me out?

A: Thank you for your e-mail. Here are some tips that may help you out.

- Be well informed and be able to talk on a wide range of subjects. Read magazines, listen to the news, read the current best sellers, see the latest movies, etc.
- Stay informed on the major news happenings of the world.
- Maintain eye contact. Look at everyone in the table while you are speaking so that everyone will feel like they are included in the conversation.
- Listen to others; do not interrupt or finish another's statement.
- If you are uncomfortable starting a conversation, be a good listener and as the conversation moves on, agree or disagree with the subject matter and you will find yourself more comfortable.
- Be interested in what other people do for a living.
- Be able to flow from one topic to another with ease.
- Do not pretend to be an expert on topics that you are not. If there is a topic you are unfamiliar with, ask them to explain. They will be more than happy to do so and you learn a thing or two.
- Do not correct another's grammar or pronunciation in public.
- Gracefully accept any compliments given to you. Be liberal with your compliments but make sure they are genuine.
- Do not ask a professional for advice or information at a social function or casual meeting. Especially if there is a doctor or a lawyer in the group. Most professionals complain that they are constantly asked for advice.
- Be sensitive to a shy person within the group. Bring him or her into the conversation by asking questions.
- Keep the conversation flowing, trying to avoid an awkward silence.

Topics you should try to avoid:

1. Your health, or more importantly, your illness.
2. Another's health, or more importantly, his/her illness.
3. Sensitive topics such as religion, politics, etc.
4. Money
5. Tragedies
6. Gossip
7. Sex

Please email your business etiquette queries to etiquetteconsultants@hotmail.com. Names of senders will not be published.

Mobilizing business toward economic growth

MAPPING THE FUTURE

David Balangue

WITHOUT doubt, 2004 will be a significant year for the Philippines as we face the challenge of the forthcoming national elections that will determine our country's leadership in the next six years.

Regardless of the election results, we in the MAP will continue to pursue our mission.

Our theme for 2004 is "Mobilizing business toward economic growth." The theme is a dynamic one that, we hope, will set to motion our projects to help us realize our association's objectives. Allow me to share with you the reasons behind this theme.

Our country is currently confronted with a myriad of problems. Problems that need to be addressed and solved if our country is to move forward at a pace equal to or better than that of our neighbors.

One of the primary purposes of our association is to promote management excellence and to contribute to the practical solution of current business problems by promoting a broad exchange of management information and application of modern business methods and practices.

The current economic situation is causing numerous business problems. And if we in MAP are to address these problems, we need to strike at their primary root causes.

Left behind

Economic indicators in the region show that the Philippines is being left behind. China and Thailand have gotten their acts together. The longer we wait and not do anything concrete, the more we will fall behind. Statistics paint a bleak outlook.

In the 2003 World Competitiveness Yearbook, the Philippines ranked behind many of its Asian neighbors, except for Indonesia. Our country has slipped down the rankings from 12th in 1999 to 22nd in 2003.

Free and open trade is upon us and we have to be ready for it. The only option is to compete, not in all industries but only in those where we clearly have a competitive advantage. And we cannot do this alone. We need foreign direct investments (FDIs).

FDI flows to the Philippines from 1997 to 2002, a period of six years, amounted to only $8 billion or slightly over one percent of the $620 billion FDI that came to East Asia, with China accounting for $286 billion, which transformed China into an economic powerhouse.

Anemic level of FDIs

FDI will not come as long as the security and protection of such investments are not assured, the courts continue to make economic policy decisions, government does not honor its contracts, the physical safety and well-being of investors are at risk, the infrastructure is inadequate to support a growing economy and the level of corruption in government is high.

Foreign investors will come here—and may I add, stay, only if we can offer a better environment for them to produce their goods at competitive costs and with less uncertainty. Uncertainty is synonymous to risk.

The more uncertainty, in terms of legal framework, investment protection, security and safety, the reliability and availability of needed infrastructure and elements of production, the higher will be the risk of doing business here. And the lower the level of FDI will be.

To enjoy the benefits of liberalization, the country should be ready to adjust to a liberalizing and globalizing economy. The country needs to re-tool and adapt if it is to survive in a world of low tariffs and free trade.

This requires building the necessary capacities and infrastructure that we direly need to attain a balanced and equitable growth and sustainable development.

Three-level framework

This capacity building is a three-level framework that consists of institutional capacity building, organizational capacity building and human capacity building.

Institutional capacity addresses legal infrastructure, investment protection, peace and order, transportation and communications, energy, financial system, among others. Organizational capacity building takes care of the enhancement of the competitiveness of individual corporations and tapping the potential of SMEs and micro-enterprises.

Human capacity building will bring about support for SMEs and micro-enterprises through entrepreneurship development and upgrading of management skills as well as greater access to information and communication technology.

A comparison of the investment incentives offered by countries in the region clearly shows that those offered by the Philippines are at par if not better than most countries in the region. Thus, the anemic FDI levels in the country cannot be addressed by offering more incentives alone.

The country's image as an investment destination needs to be improved.

In its Corruption Perceptions Index 2003, Transparency International has placed the Philippines as the 11th most corrupt nation in the world.

In addition, therefore, to addressing the country's capacity building needs, we also need to address the high level of corruption in the government. Stamping out or minimizing corruption is possible.

This can be done—not through more laws that don't get implemented anyway—but through application of the basic concept of finance, the risk-reward equation. The rewards of corruption are high and the attendant risks are not. Those who steal hundreds of millions or billions of pesos from the government go scot-free.

This cannot continue.

The risks of corruption should be increased commensurate with the rewards. Those who steal should be jailed and not be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their corruption.

No to short memories

We cannot have short memories and simply forgive and forget all the scandals and corruption that we have seen in the past few years. These scandals cannot and should not be forgotten until all the guilty parties are brought to justice in a swift and decisive fashion.

Corruption affects us all, business in particular. It hampers the country's competitiveness since we incur costs that have no economic value from a global competition standpoint.

As leaders of the business community, we in MAP can no longer ignore and pay lip service to the corruption that is in our midst. We need to act, and it should be now, rather than later.

Economic growth is at a snail's pace compared to our neighbors and needs to be stimulated. Many of our citizens have adopted a wait-and-see attitude but, I believe, the waiting has taken too long and it is time for more action.

Thus, our theme "Mobilizing business toward economic growth" suggests that we bring together the business community and, in partnership with government, make things happen.

This year, I invite the general membership to be with the MAP when it stands up to be counted. Your 2004 board will mobilize the MAP membership to enable our association to push for economic growth by helping our government in building and strengthening our capacities as well as by helping eliminate corruption in the country.

In doing so, the MAP will be able to do its humble share in attracting FDIs that are essential to our country's economic growth and competitiveness.

(This article contains the inaugural address of the author as the 55th president of the Management Association of the Philippines. He is chair and managing partner of SyCip Gorres Velayo and Co. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

Demand grows for cheap irrigation solutions

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

ONE of the cures for Philippine poverty is found in common sense.

Consider this: When a field is not irrigated, the farmer has to rely purely on rain. But the rainy season lasts just a few months here. So the farmer is left idle for at least half the year, and this makes him dirt poor.

But irrigation hikes cropping intensity, i.e. it allows the farmer to plant many crops on the same field. With irrigation, rice yields reach three tons to even six tons per hectare per year.

Irrigation is thus a vital tool for lifting millions out of rural poverty.

Enormous backlog

But farmers face a great backlog in irrigation. The land that could be irrigated adds up to 4.66 million hectares. What was actually irrigated, according to a 2001 paper, was just around 30 percent of the total.

Worse, investments in irrigation have fallen steeply.

Back in the '70s and '80s, 25,000 hectares were irrigated every year. Then this rate fell to less than 10,000 hectares in the late '90s.

Add to this the problem of siltation. Over the years many systems have deteriorated or have become clogged.

The usual national irrigation systems are not designed for raising vegetables or cash crops. They are meant for growing rice: fields are continuously submerged in water, and drainage is minimal. Because farmers have little control over national irrigation systems, they are pushed to plant low-revenue rice.

Short on funds

The vital task of linking farms to water falls on the National Irrigation Authority (NIA). It is a government owned and controlled corporation tied to the Department of Agriculture.

NIA has been running into collection problems. In 1975 farmers paid the following fees for using diversion irrigation systems: two cavans of palay (unhusked rice) per hectare during the wet season and three cavans during the dry.

The prices were higher for getting water from reservoirs and for utilizing pumps. For example, a farmer using pumps would pay 5-12 cavans per hectare during summer.

But during the term of President Joseph Estrada, the rates were socialized. For example, for farms of 2 hectares or smaller, the fee was one cavan during the wet season and 1.5 cavans during the dry.

This change in 1998 resulted in a sharp cut in irrigation revenues. The fees covered just 60 percent of operation and maintenance costs.

Irrigation fees will have to be hiked to reflect the true irrigation costs. Restore them to at least 1975 levels. Even better, resort to "volumetric pricing:" charge according to how much water the farmer uses. That will lead to greater efficiency and will allow the NIA to recover its costs.

Rehabilitate first

Another solution to the backlog is to prioritize the repair of present systems. It is much cheaper to fix broken down irrigation systems than to build new ones. The cost of building a new national system ranges from P70,000 to P180,000 per hectare.

The cost of rehabilitating a clogged one is a mere P10,000 per hectare.

Government targets for 2001 to 2004 are ambitious. The aim is to rehabilitate 700,000 hectares and bring in another 350,000 hectares under new irrigation. That's four times the past record. So far, rehabilitated areas rose by 80 percent: from 293,800 in 1998 to 542,000 in 2003. New irrigated areas increased by 60 percent: from 40,800 to 66,000 hectares.

Then another solution opens up opportunities for business. Turn to the more appropriate technology of shallow tube wells and portable low-lift pumps. The nation has enough ground water for the wells, as 5.1 million hectares are suitable for this technology.

Tube wells and low-lift pumps also have very brief gestation periods—only two to 10 days, compared to even seven years for national gravity irrigation systems. They are much cheaper, at P5,000 to P20,000 per hectare, compared to more than P100,000 for national systems. They are easy to install and are often owned by the farmers themselves.

Private irrigation

Finally, NIA is now promoting the development of irrigation systems owned and operated by the farmers themselves. It seems that irrigation will land in more private hands.

According to NIA records, around 20 percent of irrigated areas are served by privately owned systems. But economist Cristina David gives a much higher figure. She believes that 650,000 hectares—two to three times NIA's estimates—are farmer owned.

The cheap technology of shallow tube wells may drive this trend. In fact firms have taken the lead where the technology has spread, like Regions 1, 2 and 3. For every shallow tube well set up by the government in 1997, the private sector has installed more than 10.

Business should look more into the farmers' growing demand for cheap irrigation. *Comments to darroyo@philonline.com*

MAP fetes Management Man and new prexy

AMBASSADOR Jesus P. Tambunting, chair and chief executive officer of Planters Development Bank, is the Management Man of the Year 2003.

The Management Man of the Year is a prestigious award that the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP) bestows on individuals in the business community and the government, for attaining unquestioned distinction in the practice of management and for contributing to the country's progress.

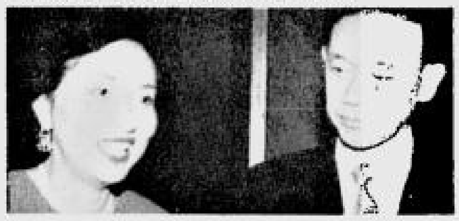
The conferment of the award to Tambunting followed a thorough, stringent selection process. The distinction of Management Man of the Year has been conferred only 25 times in the 36-year history of the award.

Tambunting was chosen for steering Plantersbank to phenomenal growth—from a single office in 1972 to 70 branches nationwide today. With consolidated resources of over P30 billion and capital of P2.8 billion, Plantersbank is currently the 22nd largest bank in the Philippines.

Equally important, Tambunting was recognized for his role in heightening bilateral relations between the Philippines and the United Kingdom during his term as the country's ambassador to the Court of St. James from 1993 to 1998.

FORMER Finance Secretary Roberto F. de Ocampo and Management Man of the Year Jesus P. Tambunting PHOTOS BY JOHNNY VILLE

FORMER presidential contender Santiago Dumlao and Sen. Aquilino Pimentel



MR and Ms Jose Mari Chan

JOSE L. Cuisia, Philamlife president

EDWARD Ferreira turns over the presidency to David Balangue.

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NTERTAINMENT
E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

History-making Korean film hits Philippine market

By Nini Valera

THE LATEST import from South Korea is a big fish of a movie that sank director James Cameron's "Titanic" at the tills in that country.

Director Je-gyu Kang's "Shiri," (the name of a small fresh water fish), which has turned the tide for Korean films and made history by being a blockbuster, earning at least $42 million during its Korean run in 1999, will hit Metro Manila theaters and movie houses in selected cities nationwide this week.

What is amazing about the movie breaking box office history in Korea, according to Kim Myung Whan, distributor of "Shiri" in the Philippines, is that Korean films rarely make money in their native land, despite the government's protection of its local film industry.

Speaking through Hyun Mo Park, founder and chair of the Filipino-Korean Cultural Foundation, Inc., Kim said Korean laws require a film producer to make at least three movies a year in order for them to be permitted to import Hollywood movies.

"They make money on their imports and not on their local productions," Kim said. Like the rest of most of the world, the Korean film market is entranced with Hollywood blockbusters, he added.

But "Shiri" can hit the foreign markets itself, including the US, according to Kim.

"The movie is something like the films we import from the West," he said.

Bench mark

Produced for $10 million, a paltry sum when compared to bloated production costs of Swarzennager movies, "Shiri" is, so far, the most expensive movie that has been made in Korea. Making it was considered to be a very big risk. But the risk paid off, said Kim.

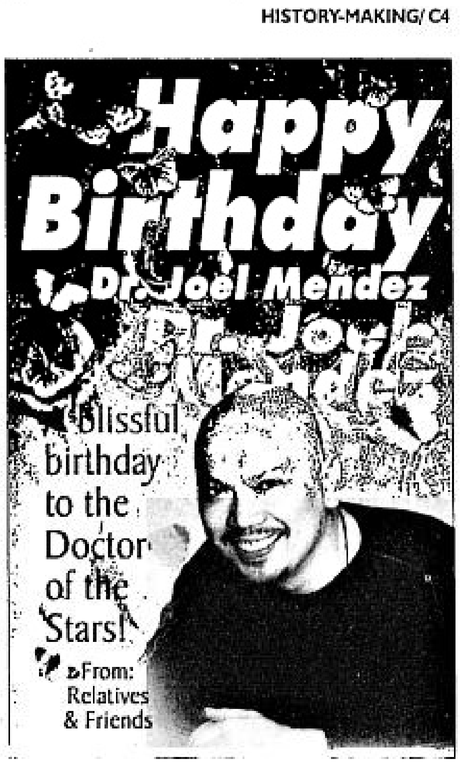
Seven million South Koreans trooped to movie houses and paid $6 to watch the film, according to the film distributor. "Shiri" has since become the bench mark for commercial viability of Korean movies, which, so far have not been top of mind choices among Asiaphiles.

Kim credits "Shiri's" success in his country on the movie's powerful and explosive subject of unification of the two Koreas. Director Kang is a respected film maker in Korea, and after "Shiri," has become the country's most famous director.

The use of "Shiri" as the title of this espionage action thriller that tackles political unrest, touches on terrorism and is spiked with romance is also significant, said Kim.

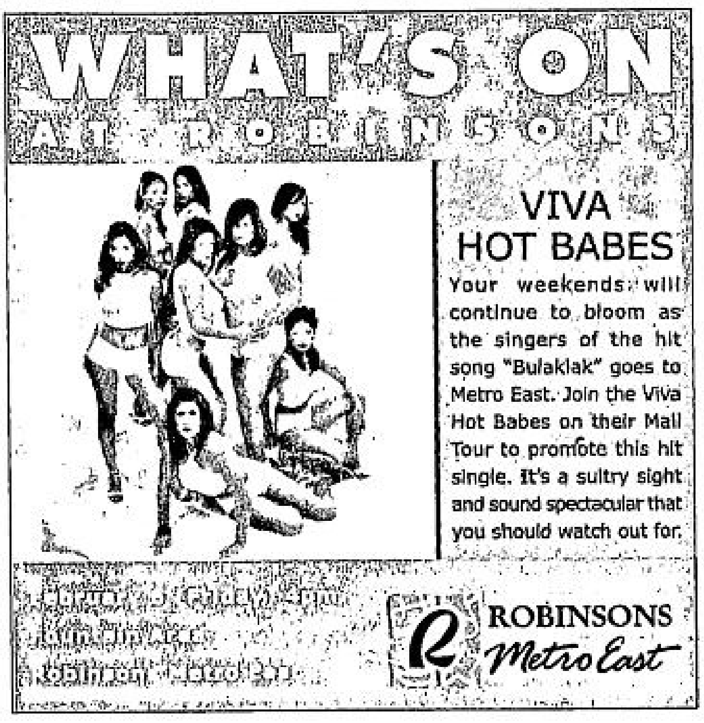
Shiri, a small fresh water fish, which is found only in a stream that is bounded by the two Koreas in the north and south. People from both Koreas have longed for unification since 1953, he explained. And so far, both governments have not yet arrived at a satis-

HISTORY-MAKING/ C4


Happy Birthday
Dr. Joel Mendez
Blissful birthday to the Doctor of the Stars!
From: Relatives & Friends

WHAT'S INSIDE

■ DJ Alvaro: Sex-bomb doppelganger /A29
■ Angelu: Living for love and loving it /C3


WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS

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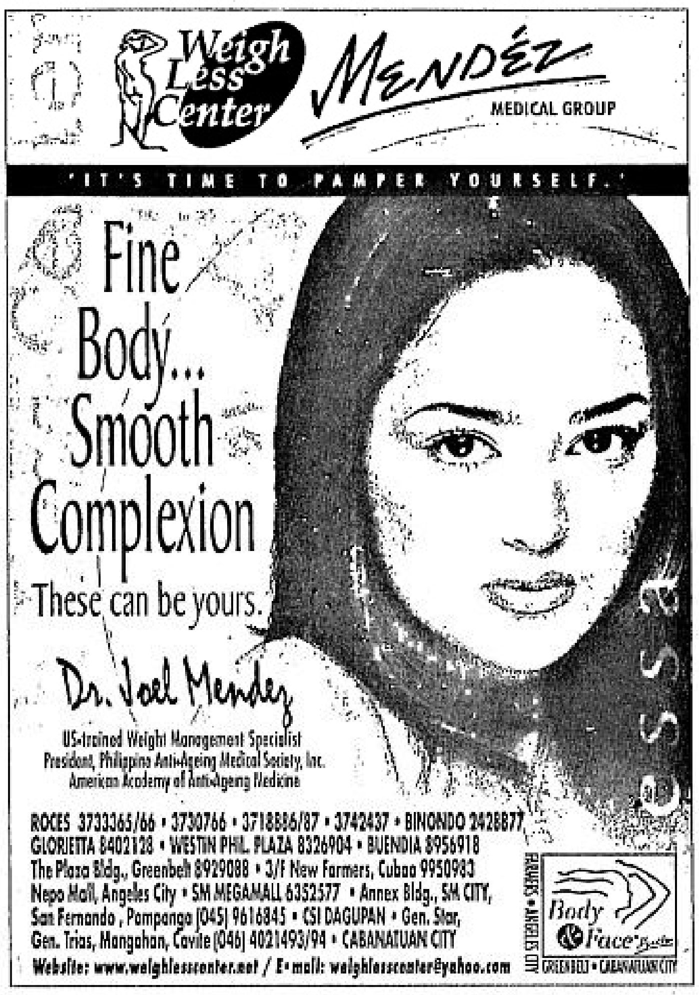
Your weekends will continue to bloom as the singers of the hit song "Bulaklak" goes to Metro East. Join the Viva Hot Babes on their Mall Tour to promote this hit single. It's a sultry sight and sound spectacular that you should watch out for.

ROBINSONS Metro East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Westside Story

#1 sa Taiwan

Siguradong patok sa kabataan!

Sa Westside Street, matira ang matibay.
Sina Adrian at Warren, magkakabanggaan.
Pati sa puso ni Jamie, magkaribal ang turingan.
Madadaan ba 'to sa pagalingan?
O paramihan ng pogi points ang labanan?

Saan ka pa?! Go west na!

PREMIERES TODAY @ 5pm

ABS-CBN

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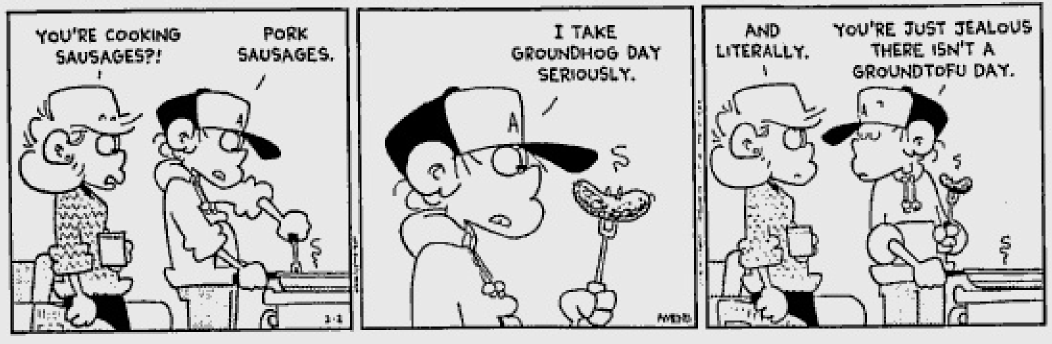
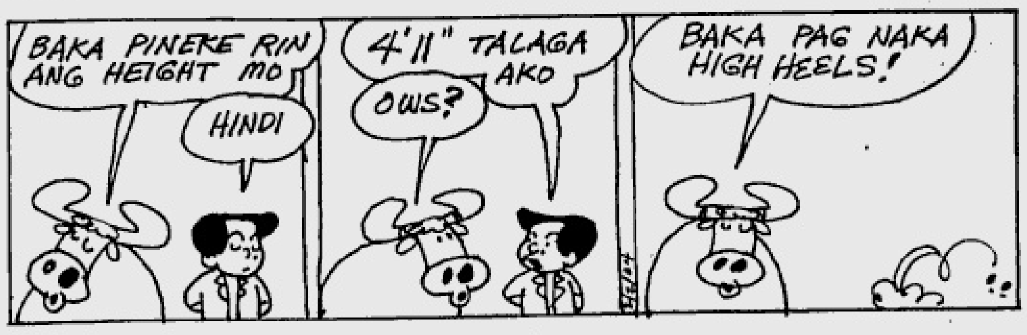
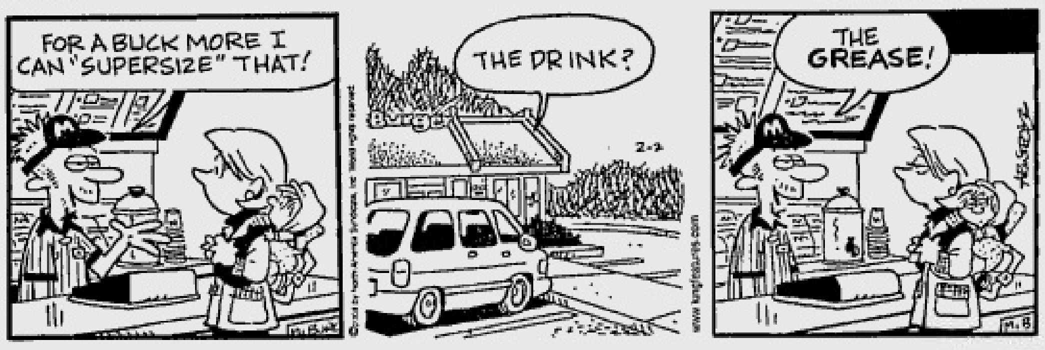
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


YOU'RE COOKING SAUSAGES?!
PORK SAUSAGES.
I TAKE GROUNDHOG DAY SERIOUSLY.
AND LITERALLY.
YOU'RE JUST JEALOUS THERE ISN'T A GROUNDTOFU DAY.

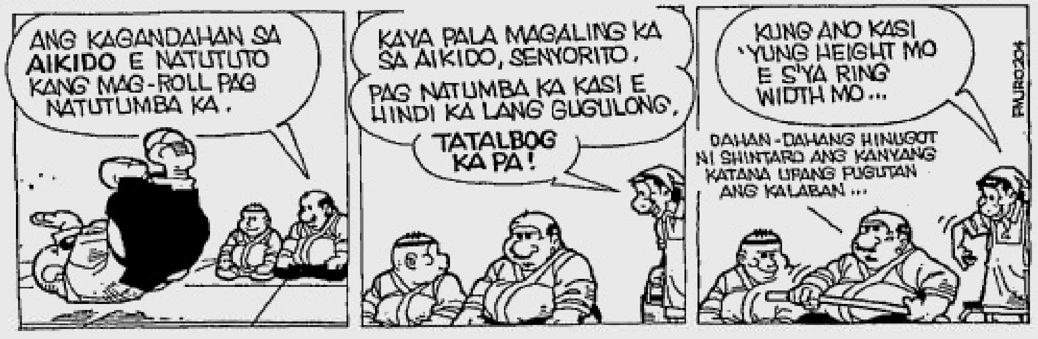
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


BAKA PINEKE RIN ANG HEIGHT MO
HINDI
4'11" TALAGA AKO
OWS?
BAKA PAG NAKA HIGH HEELS!

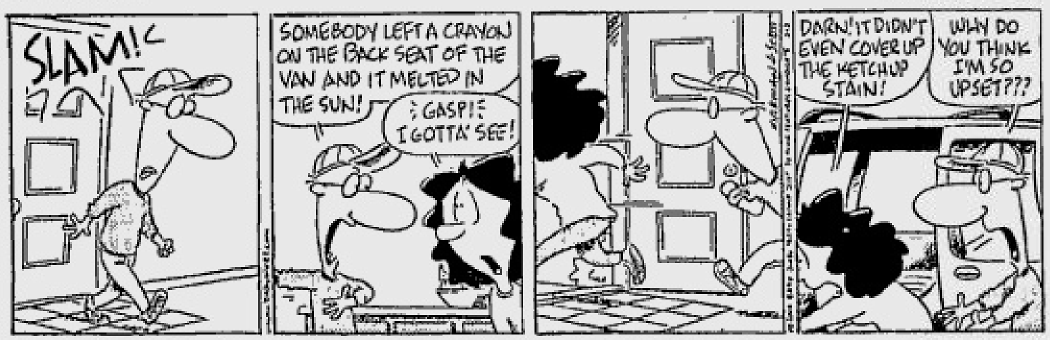
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


FOR A BUCK MORE I CAN "SUPERSIZE" THAT!
THE DRINK?
THE GREASE!

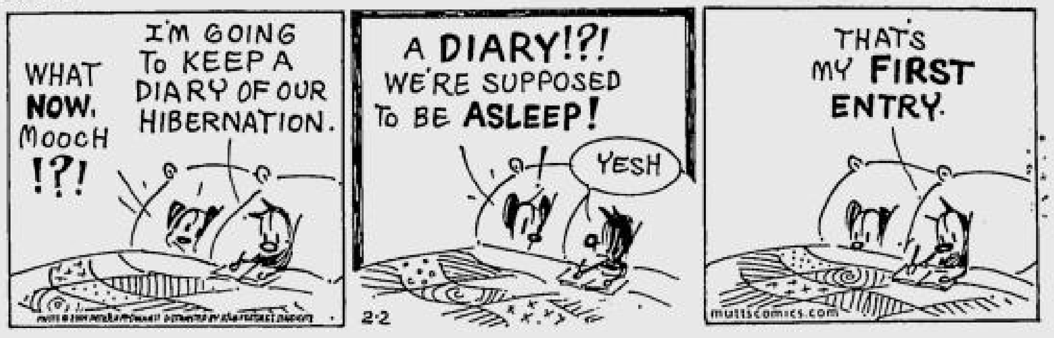
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG KAGANDAHAN SA AIKIDO E NATUTUTO KANG MAG-ROLL PAG NATUTUMBA KA.
KAYA PALA MAGALING KA SA AIKIDO, SENYORITO.
PAG NATUMBA KA KASI E HINDI KA LANG GUGULONG,
TATALBOG KA PA!
KUNG ANO KASI 'YUNG HEIGHT MO E S'YA RING WIDTH MO...
DAHAN-DAHANG HINUGOT NI SHINTARO ANG KANYANG KATANA UPANG PUGUTAN ANG KALABAN...

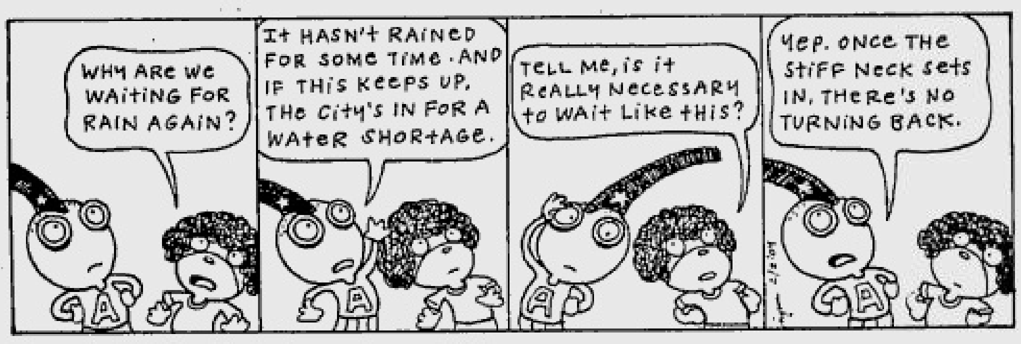
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


SLAM!
SOMEBODY LEFT A CRAYON ON THE BACK SEAT OF THE VAN AND IT MELTED IN THE SUN!
GASP! I GOTTA' SEE!
DARN! IT DIDN'T EVEN COVER UP THE KETCHUP STAIN!
WHY DO YOU THINK I'M SO UPSET???

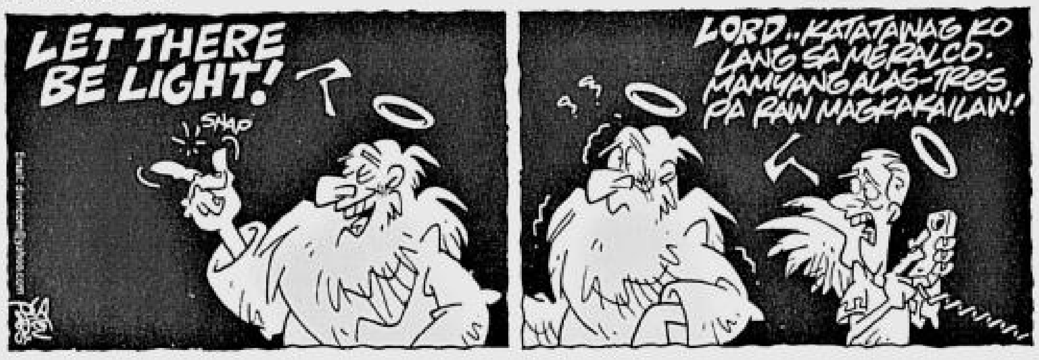
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


WHAT NOW, MOOCH !?!
I'M GOING TO KEEP A DIARY OF OUR HIBERNATION.
A DIARY!?! WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ASLEEP!
YESH
THAT'S MY FIRST ENTRY.
2-2
muttscomics.com

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WHY ARE WE WAITING FOR RAIN AGAIN?
IT HASN'T RAINED FOR SOME TIME. AND IF THIS KEEPS UP, THE CITY'S IN FOR A WATER SHORTAGE.
TELL ME, IS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO WAIT LIKE THIS?
YEP. ONCE THE STIFF NECK SETS IN, THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LET THERE BE LIGHT!
SNAP
LORD.. KATATAWAG KO LANG SA MERALCO. MAMAYANG ALAS-TRES PA RAW MAGKAKAILAW!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: Above all, you are original. You are also polished, sophisticated and dynamic. No job is too big for you to attempt. You prefer to work in private; however, you can work well with others. You sometimes appear relaxed and cavalier, but you always work hard to get what you want. The year ahead is full of exciting beginnings for you.
Birthdate of: James Joyce, author; Farrah Fawcett, actress; Graham Nash, musician.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Discussions with friends are sweet and idealistic today. You feel gentle toward others in your heart. You might want to help someone in a special way.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might propose an idea to your boss or someone important about how to help those in need to support a public charity. Your humanitarian urges are strongly aroused today.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel attracted to the study of mysticism. Perhaps you have seen "The Lord of the Rings" or some such movie that stirred your ancient soul? You want to learn.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Others are willing to help you in a sympathetic, supportive fashion now. Conversely, you might be the one extending help to someone today.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your communications with those closest to you are beautifully sympathetic today. It's practically as if you can read each other's minds. (Kinda spooky.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Co-workers are enormously helpful today. You want to help others as well. This is one of those days when good vibes overflow, spilling onto everyone and bringing joy into people's lives.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your creative abilities are off the chart today. Trust your ideas! You also feel extremely sympathetic and caring toward children today. (In your private life, you could fall madly in love!)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): There is a beautiful sense of give-and-take between family members today. You might also want to introduce something quite luxurious for your home.

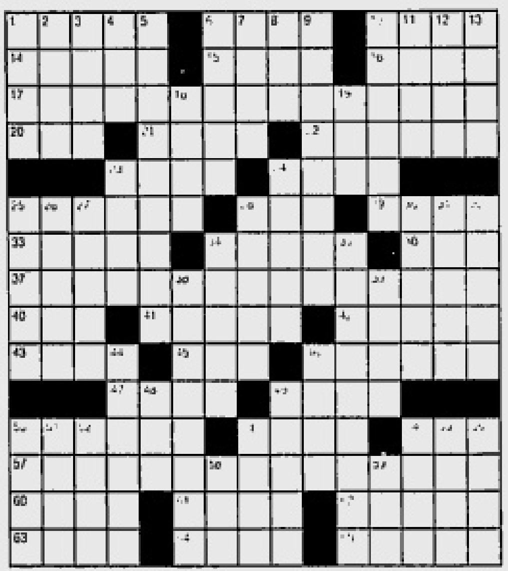
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today your mind is full of day-dreams and fantasies! You are more future-oriented than any other sign. However, you need to know that there's something positive waiting for you around the next corner in the road.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You want to spend your money on something luxurious today. You like things that impress others (as well as impressing yourself). Go ahead, if you can afford it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Today your idealism is aroused. You want to help society or help those in your immediate surroundings. You know that like minds can unite to make things right.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You might not have the freedom of movement that you expected today. Obligations and responsibilities to others curtail your actions and plans. Ironically, you don't mind.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR

2/2/04

ACROSS
1 God of the Koran
6 Fencer's foil
10 Burrows and Fortas
14 Ta-da!
15 Cartoon Betty
16 Anna Sten film
17 Daily run
20 Vitamin fig.
21 Stable locks
22 Travolta movie
23 Dashing Grant
24 Preacher Roberts
25 Minor adjustments
28 One Gabor
29 Roe source
33 Undue speed
34 Tight perm
36 Wallach or Whitney
37 Daily doze
40 Born in Paris
41 Good judgment
42 Twangy
43 Does wrong
45 Kind of chart
46 Al and Bobby of auto racing
47 Bk. of Revelations
49 H.S. junior's exam
50 Fifth Hebrew month
53 Female military grp.
54 4-stringed guitar
57 Daily redeye
60 Not quite shut
61 Skewer
62 Brilliant success
63 Low places
64 Creche figures
65 Rouen's river

DOWN
1 Asseverate
2 Take a __ off
3 Old Italian bread?
4 Everything
5 Knockout blows
6 Hard, dark wood
7 Skin opening
8 Many years
9 Clever quips
10 Anaheim nine
11 California south of the border
12 Son of Seth
13 Profoundly wise
18 Fourth planet
19 Gun grp.
23 Actress Blanchett
24 Sheepish?
25 Clan chief
26 Thin cookie
27 Organic compound
28 Irregular as if eaten away
30 "Demian" writer
31 Church table
32 Gauges
34 Dunce-cap shaped
35 Highest points
38 Favoritism for family
39 New York City river
44 Rescuers
46 Mil. branch
48 "Peter __"
49 Singer LaBelle
50 Stick starter?
51 One who has been to Mecca
52 South Dakota, to Pierre
53 Early American political party
54 Citrus fruit
55 Aga __ III
56 Major termination?
58 Coll. student's rating
59 Hockey rink

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

P	R	E	C	E	D	E	S		C	A	S	H	E	W
R	E	L	A	T	I	V	E		A	R	O	U	S	E
E	G	O	M	A	N	I	A		P	R	O	M	P	T
P	A	P	P		S	A	L	U	T	A	T	I	O	N
A	L	I	A	S		N	A	R	I	S		D	U	E
R	E	N	N	I	E		N	A	V		L	O	S	S
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			L	O	G	S		S	T	A	B			
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E	R	G		L	A	V	A	S		S	A	N	T	A
C	O	M	P	E	T	E	N	C	E		T	E	E	N
T	R	O	U	P	E		C	A	R	R	I	A	G	E
R	A	I	L	E	R		E	N	D	A	N	G	E	R
A	L	D	E	R	S		S	T	A	G	G	E	R	Y

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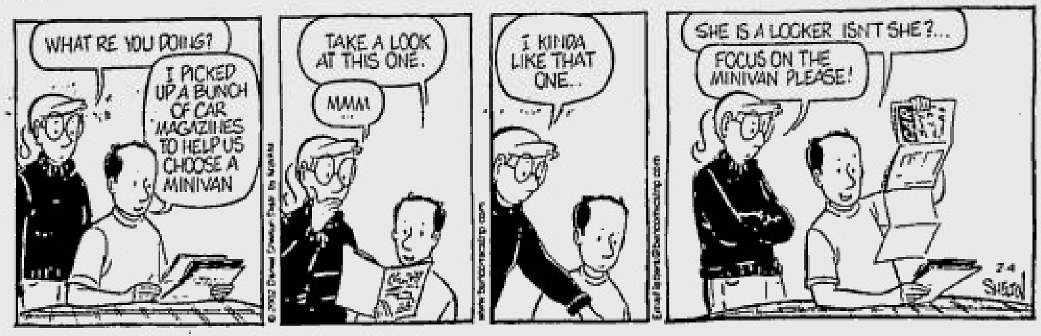
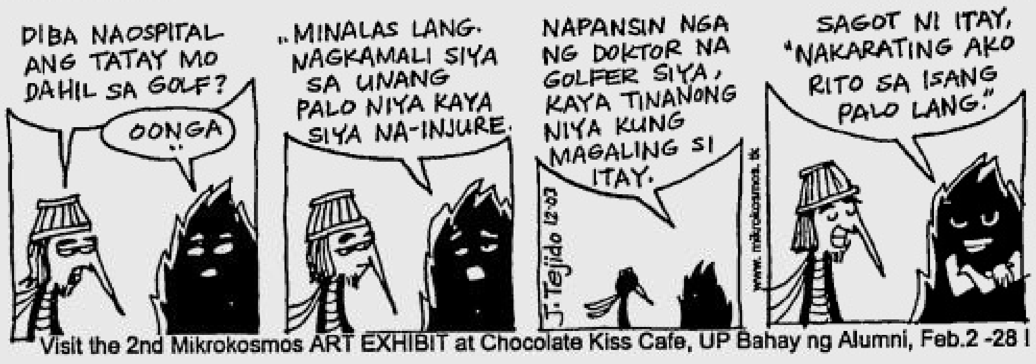
2/2/04

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

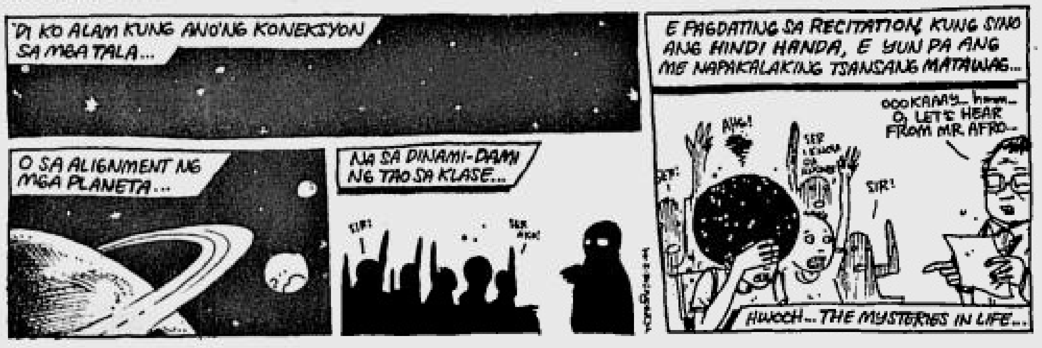

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
I PICKED UP A BUNCH OF CAR MAGAZINES TO HELP US CHOOSE A MINIVAN
TAKE A LOOK AT THIS ONE.
MMM...
I KINDA LIKE THAT ONE...
SHE IS A LOCKER ISN'T SHE?...
FOCUS ON THE MINIVAN PLEASE!

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

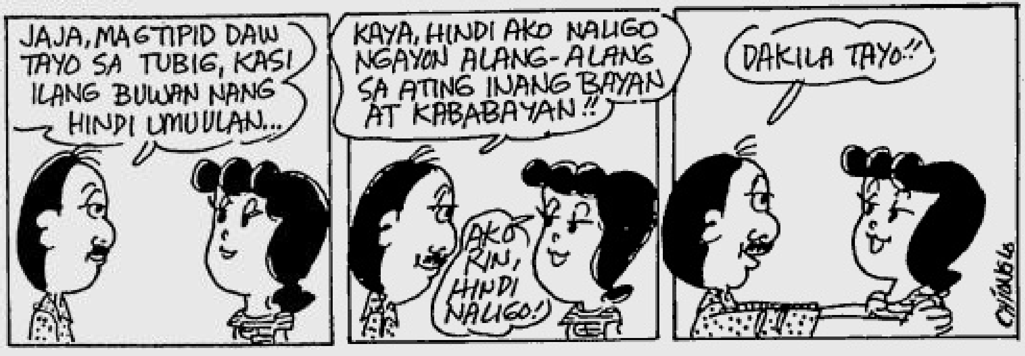

DIBA NAOSPITAL ANG TATAY MO DAHIL SA GOLF?
OONGA
..MINALAS LANG. NAGKAMALI SIYA SA UNANG PALO NIYA KAYA SIYA NA-INJURE.
NAPANSIN NGA NG DOKTOR NA GOLFER SIYA, KAYA TINANONG NIYA KUNG MAGALING SI ITAY.
SAGOT NI ITAY, "NAKARATING AKO RITO SA ISANG PALO LANG."
J. Tejido 12-03

Visit the 2nd Mikrokosmos ART EXHIBIT at Chocolate Kiss Cafe, UP Bahay ng Alumni, Feb.2 -28 I

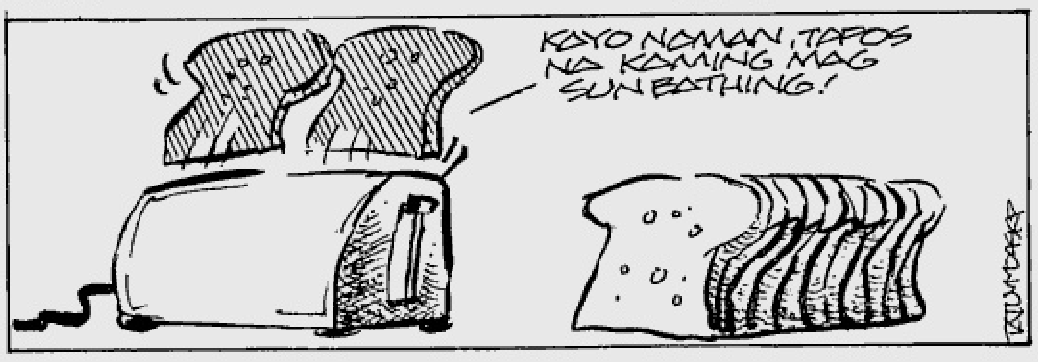
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


'DI KO ALAM KUNG ANO'NG KONEKSYON SA MGA TALA...
O SA ALIGNMENT NG MGA PLANETA...
NA SA DINAMI-DAMI NG TAO SA KLASE...
SIR!
SER AKO!
E PAGDATING SA RECITATION, KUNG SINO ANG HINDI HANDA, E YUN PA ANG ME NAPAKALAKING TSANSANG MATAWAG...
AHG!
SIR!
OOOKAAAY... hmm... O, LET'S HEAR FROM MR. AFRO...
HWOOH... THE MYSTERIES IN LIFE...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, MAGTIPID DAW TAYO SA TUBIG, KASI ILANG BUWAN NANG HINDI UMUULAN...
KAYA, HINDI AKO NALIGO NGAYON ALANG-ALANG SA ATING INANG BAYAN AT KABABAYAN!!
AKO RIN, HINDI NALIGO!
DAKILA TAYO!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KAYO NAMAN, TAPOS NA KAMING MAG SUN BATHING!

Living for love and loving it

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Rudy Esperas

"I LIVE for love. I was shown love by my family so I want to share it. I get sad because I feel like I'm always taken for granted. Sometimes, I even ask myself, *may pagkukulang ba ako* (is there anything lacking in me)?"

This is young actress Angelu de Leon talking. Even after two failed relationships that resulted into two precocious daughters—Maria Louise Nicole with actor Joko Diaz, and Maria Louise Margaret with a former boyfriend, Angelu remains unafraid to fall in love.

But like any other woman, the actress, who is a single mother, says she also gets frustrated.

"If I'm hurt, I just keep quiet," says Angelu during an interview in her home in Quezon City. "But I ask questions. I want to know why this person did this to me or why things turned out the way they did. I want this person to make me understand."

Angelu compares herself to Collete Camacho, the character she portrays in GMA 7's newest soap series "Te Amo, Maging Sino Ka Man," which also stars Iza Calzado and Argentinean superstar Segundo Sernandas. She plays the troubled daughter of a town mayor (Johnny Delgado), who became obsessed with a Spanish fisherman Fernando, the character played by Sernadas.

"Te Amo, Maging Sino Ka Man," premieres today on GMA 7 at 8 p.m.

"Collete and I are alike in many ways. When she loves someone, she fights for him. She does everything in her power to get what she wants," Angelu says of her character. "That's why when she finds something she really treasures, Collete keeps it close to her heart."

Angelu considers her daughters as her most treasured possessions. "I believe that God sent them to me with a purpose. With them around, I will never feel alone."

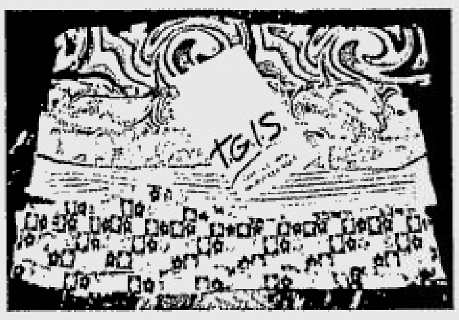
Because of her children, Angelu is able to bounce back from failed relationships gracefully and swiftly, according to the actress. She says she now handles pain and frustration better than her soap character.

"Collete is Angelu before she had kids," Angelu explains. "She drinks. She smokes. She tortures herself. I don't want to be like her (Collete). And even if I'm tempted to be like her, I don't want to because of my kids.

"I don't like shouting. I isolate myself for a while. I check in a hotel for three days. I try to find myself. I give myself time to think and cry. After that, I try to go out, shop, go to the parlor just so that I would feel good about myself," says Angelu.

MANY FIRSTS. A jacket and pair of jeans Angelu had worn during her first pictorial with lensman Jun de Leon

PRICEY PAIR. An old high-heeled pair of Manolo Blanik still fits Angelu nicely.



TGIS SOUVENIRS. Angelu no longer wears these pairs of pants, but her mom uses the shirt for sleeping.

ANGELU treasures the green belt given to her by the mom of her "special someone."

The actress says she and Collete also have different tastes in clothes.

Angelu describes Collete as a fashionista, who prefers clothes made of colorful fabrics and eccentric designs. But the actress goes for neutral colors and classic cuts.

"A lot of the clothes that I wear on the set of 'Te Amo' were merely handed to me by the wardrobe consultants. I just mix and match them with what I have. I would never be caught wearing the clothes she wears."

During this Out of the Closet visit, Angelu eagerly ushers INQUIRER Entertainment inside a walk-in closet filled with the clothes that *she* loves to wear, including keepsakes from her first soap series "Thank God It's Sabado," also on GMA 7, and from her movie "Bulaklak ng Maynila."

Angelu's sexy turn in Joel Lamangan's "Bulaklak ng Maynila," earned her best supporting actress awards.

She was last seen in Tikoy Aguiluz's "xxx.com," about Internet prostitution, where she starred with Gary Estrada and Juliana Palermo.

Blouses. "My mom is fond of buying me clothes that she likes. It's good that I get to use them during tapings so she won't feel bad.

"I got these silk blouses for my "Ikaw na Sana" soap series in 1996. These are from Fish. It's my first soap opera with Bobby Andrews, Gladys Reyes and Carmi Martin. I still use them, but not too often. The designs are very striking so people remember.

Costume. "I wore this in the first movie I made after giving birth, 'Bulaklak ng Maynila.' This is the most daring movie I've done so far.

"This costume is really sexy. I had to hold my breath so I would fit in it. (laughs). This is really memorable to me. *Lakasan ng loob ang pagsuot nito* (You've got to have guts to be able to wear this)."

Bags. "This bag from Gucci is one of my favorites. It was given to me by my special someone. This is my first medium-sized bag. All of my bags are either super small or super big. This one is just right. I've had this for two years already.

"I also love this bag because of its color. I actually don't know if it's silver, gold or olive. *Mahirap s'yang ternohan* (It's difficult to find a match for it. It's so tiny. It also has a wallet of the same color. I bought it in New York in 2000.

"I'm guilty of overspending on bags. Buying really small bags are not practical. My phone and money are all it could carry. But I used to go for the classic black, brown and beige. It's only recently that I wanted to have a yellow or a blue bag."

TGIS Jackets. "I wore this during the very first pictorial I had with Jun de Leon. I was so young then, I didn't know how to smile in front of the camera. He would always tell me to open my eyes when I smile. I'm *chinita* (chinky-eyed) *kasi* so when I smile, my eyes disappear. This has a matching pair of pants. This was given by my manager Viana Fores.

"Most of my clothes then were picked by my manager. I remember wearing this yellow winter vest when we were promoting TGIS."

TGIS pants, shirt and cap. "I don't get to use these pants anymore. Imagine how small my waistline was! I hope I could use them again.

"I've kept the T-shirt and cap after all these years. My mom still wears the shirt to bed. I wore these in one of our concerts.

Framed painting. "Designer Pepito Albert gave this to me on my 18th birthday. He designed my gown. He painted this using watercolor. This is important to me. I think I really looked good on my 18th birthday because of him. I was like a princess *talaga*."

Jacket. "I'm not too fond of jackets. But if I'm made to choose among what I have, I'd choose this denim jacket. I could use it for day or night. I could pair it with anything. I got this from Myx last year. I know Korina Sanchez has the same style."

Underwear. "I don't go much for branded underwear. But I make sure that they match and are presentable. I have this unexplained fear that I might have an accident, and people would have to undress me and see me wearing underwear that don't match. *Nakakahiya.* I make sure I'm presentable inside and out.

"When I sleep, I use what I call the grandma panties so I'm more comfortable. But when I go out, I use thongs. I hate it when the lines are visible. The lines either make your butt look too big or too flat."

Jeans. "My favorite is from Tyler. I like the fit. I prefer the straight cut than the flared ones. I don't like wearing flared pants with flat shoes. I would only look small. Straight cut jeans make me look long-legged.

"I have this pair of Dickies jeans that I've been wearing for three years now. It's made from a very light fabric and its not too baggy.

Shorts. "I wear shorts to bed. I'm not into sexy lingerie. Not yet. Maybe when I get married.

"I'm also very particular with the length of the shorts. *Ayoko nung para kang lilipad sa lapad.*

"My favorite is this pair of red board shorts because it really fits me well. The length is not too long but not too short *naman*. I've had this since my TGIS days."

Boots. "It's Bally. It needs repair. Guys from Mr. Quickie said if I want it repaired, they would have to replace the sole. *Hindi na s'ya* Bally *n'un.* I've had this since 1999.

"I look for boots with pointed toes. I've had squared toes, but I've never bought rounded-tips. Even if the boots were really pointed, I make sure they don't pinch my toes. I buy boots that are bigger by half a size. I leave room for socks.

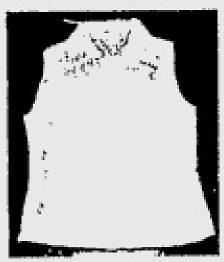
"Those who will wear boots for the first time, make sure that you could walk in them. Sometimes *kasi*, they hurt even when you're just sitting. You start first with wide-heeled ones be-

LIVING/ C4

OUT OF THE CLOSET

GUCCI jacket from New York

A PAIR of Bally boots that needs repair



A WINTER vest Angelu loved wearing on the set of 'TGIS'

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History-making Korean film hits Philippine market

BOSTON-EDUCATED Kim plays the role of a terrorist in "Shiri."

From page C1

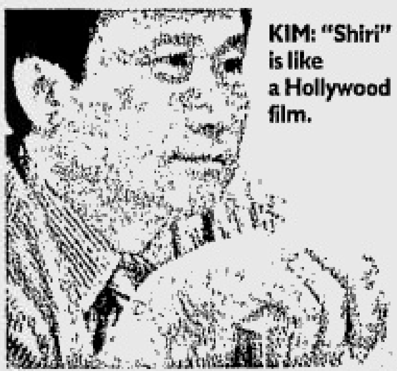
factory conclusion to the problem.

But "Shiri" is also a daring movie, according to its publicity materials, in its attempt to be sympathetic to the North. This is impacted in a dialogue from the movie, "How can you, who grew up eating Coke and hamburgers, understand that your brothers in the North are starving," which, a few years back, would never have been approved by South Korea's censorship laws.

Formulaic, cliché-ridden

Kang, who wrote the script of "Shiri," has a style comparable to his Hollywood counterparts, said Kim.

Writing for the "Asian Cult Cinema" magazine published in the US, film critic Anthony Leong dismissed "Shiri" as a "formulaic and cliché-ridden thriller that suffers from some missed opportunities." But in the same review, Leong wrote that the "action sequences are rather fun to watch, and probably the film's only saving grace." He noted, too, that the movie's "production values, particularly in the action department, are top-notch." He described Kang's "cinematic direction," as "more competent, blending the 'hyper-reality of Kirk Wong ("The Big Hit") and the graceful slow-mo of John Woo ("Mission: Impossible") in a number of memorable sequences, such as a daring daylight heist on a highway, a pitched exchange of gunfire through city streets, and the film's cinematic and visually-stunning showdown in Seoul stadium."



KIM: "Shiri" is like a Hollywood film.

TERRY HEARSEY

Wild World Entertainment Co., Inc.'s Reno Lim, who has partnered with Kim in distributing "Shiri" in the Philippines, expressed surprise when he saw the movie.

Big difference

"You'd be surprised Korea has been able to do a movie like 'Shiri.' At first, you'd think it's a Hollywood copycat. But there is a big difference between the movie and American films. There are a lot of things to see in 'Shiri,' and plenty of things to like about it. There is a love angle, and immediately, when there is love, Filipinos attach themselves to the story. That is what I really like about the movie—the love angle," Lim told INQUIRER Entertainment.

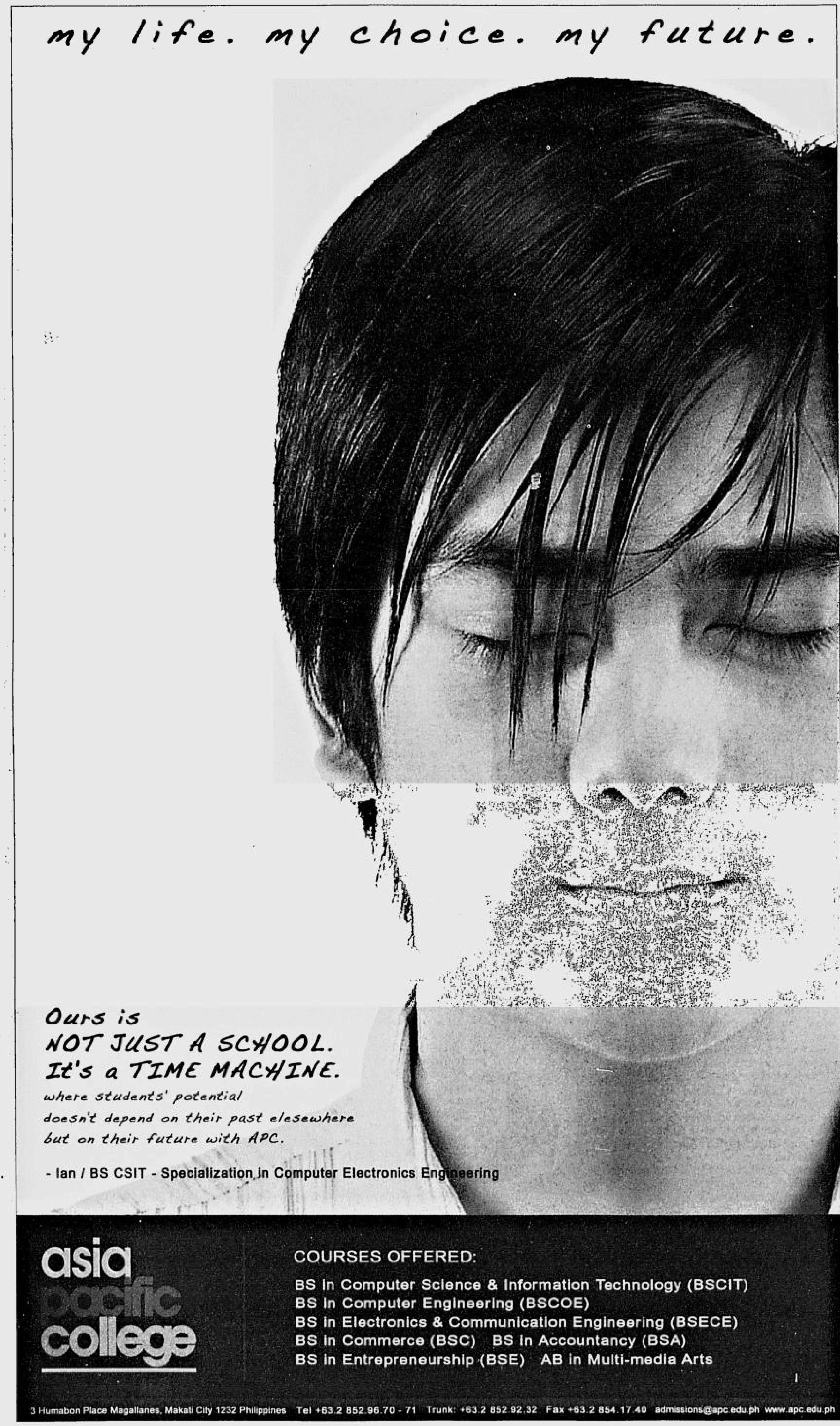
He said that "Shiri" is the start of a partnership that could be continued "by promoting Filipino movies in Korea and Korean films here. We hope to make the ties between these two countries closer."

Bright future

That partnership might have a bright future.

GMA 7 is now airing the Korean telenovela "Endless Love." The Hello Kitty-esque Puka character is emblazoned in little girls' T-shirts and other gewgaws. Kia Pride is still advertised as the people's car. Samsung is fast becoming the object of desire for high-definition television sets. Korea, too, has become a destination of choice for Overseas Filipino Workers. So how can "Shiri" be far behind in the consciousness of the Pinoy? The take at the tills will tell.

For more information on "Shiri," visit www.selkor.com.



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A GUCCI bag, given by Angelu's special someone, is one of her favorites. Except for this bag, which she has owned for more than two years, all of her bags are super small or mega big.

Living . . .

From page C3

fore moving to stilettoes. It is also important to look for a design that would look good on you. Pointed-tips are good for girls who are long-legged. If your feet are wide, don't wear pointed boots. It will only hurt your feet. If your feet are stressed, the whole body is stressed.

"I believe that price is not important, but the quality is. If you're going to buy a cheap pair of boots, you'd wear it only a few times before it falls apart. It's equivalent to one expensive but really good pair of shoes that you could wear for five years.

"My Manolo Blahniks, Pradas and Guccis are still with me after all these years. They still fit me very nicely.

Formal wear. "I was able to keep this one-piece formal suit from my TGIS days. I still use it. If I want it to look a bit more casual, I match it with a sweater or cardigan. For more formal occasions, I wear a scarf or a shawl with it and high-heeled, open-toed sandals. I also have this in blue.

Blazers. "I bought one in Mango recently. It's a leather blazer with matching pants of the same material. It could be worn in an awards ceremony or any formal gathering.

"I also bought this white Gucci jacket in New York. It was winter when I went there. The jacket is really unique. It's white and the only accent is its leather collar."

Dresses. "I wore this lime-green serpentina dress on my 18th birthday. I had this on while I was greeting my guests. It's off-shoulders and really fits the body.

"This lilac dress was what I wore for the film fest ceremony where I won my best supporting actress award for 'Bulaklak ng Maynila.' This was made by Inno Sotto. This is a really simple design, but is bare-back, beaded and has a matching shawl.

"I go for the really simple cuts. I don't like it too *bongga*. If it's a ball gown, it really has to look like a ball gown, like the one that I wore in my debut. I don't know how many meters of fabric was used for this, but it could stand on its own. When I wore it, I just had to hop into it. Actually, toward the end of the party, I removed my shoes and was walking around barefooted and nobody noticed."

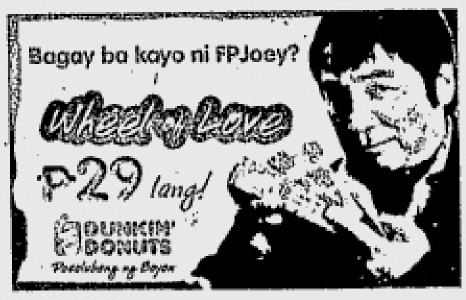
Accessories. "I only discovered the importance of wearing accessories recently. I need to wear these for my role. I've realized that accessories really make a difference.

"Now, I'm more fond of Moranos. A special someone gave me a very, very beautiful pair of Morano earrings. Its drop earrings with a gold heart and is one of my favorites now. I have what I call power earrings. If I wear them, feeling *ko, ang ganda-ganda ko*.

"I also have this pair of Morano earrings and bracelet that are called Boa because they look like a snake. I've not worn them yet because they're huge. I have yet to find clothes that would match them.

"When you wear slip-on earrings, make sure they don't fall off by tightening the locks. It happened to me once, I lost one of my power earrings in a restaurant. I bugged the restaurant up to midnight until they found it and got it back. I bought that pair in Guam. Everybody liked it."

Belts. "I'm really not into wearing belts, but there is one that I really like. It was given to me by the mom of my special someone. I like it because I find it very useful and easy to wear. I can wear it with green, orange and purple. It's also adjustable. I think this is one of my most fashionable belts."



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Subsection Editor **Lito Zulueta**

The truth about the Manton de Manila

It didn't come from Manila but China through the romance of the Galleon Trade. But let's perpetuate the myth

ALL4ART

Bea Zobel Jr.

IT doesn't fail. Every time someone in Madrid would hear that I was going home, I would get: "Bea, bring me back a Manton de Manila, por favor!" Back in the Philippines I would search in vain. No one seemed to know where to find the precious shawls.

Eventually, I learned what every school girl knows—that the Manton de Manila did not come from our country. It was not made by Filipinos. It actually came from China.

Of course, the manton is not the only thing in this world which is geographically misnamed. I suppose it is to be expected that in the encounter between cultures from different parts of the globe, some confusion will arise.

The most obvious example would be the American Indians. They take their name from Columbus' presumption that he had made it to India instead of America. Perhaps all those days at sea had made him delirious! Hey, after just two hours in an Edsa traffic jam I already feel that I am in a different planet!

At any rate, because of Columbus' mistake we now have a pesky problem. I'm sure many of you have had to spend time clarifying when talking about Indian art whether you mean the Taj Mahal or Pocahontas. This muddle is the reason for that clumsy term "Amerindian." Imagine referring to our childhood game as "Cowboys and Amerindians?"

Ino Manalo points out that "papel de Hapon" probably doesn't come from Japan anymore. You also might say the same of Brussel sprouts not being the exclusive province of the Belgian capital.

One more example closer to home are Tingguian blankets. There are the blankets which antique dealers like to say come from Abra. Ino's friend Dave Baradas has a theory that these blankets were really woven in the towns of Ilocos. The association between the Tingguian people and the blankets arises from the fact that the Tingguian have managed to preserve so many pieces perhaps because of the traditional isolation of their mountain communities.

History of misnaming

To return then to our mantones, their misnaming is a story in itself. It is the story of the Galleon Trade which ran between 1571 and 1811. The trade was the only authorized shipping connection between Asia and Spanish America. Through the galleons, the various products of the Asian countries reached Mexico. On the return trip came Mexican silver. For the longest time, Mexican silver coins were the accepted currency of China. Ino tells me of buying the silver dollars in the little town of Lijiang in the middle of Yunnan province. He thought he had stumbled upon a rare bit of history. The coins would later turn out to be clever fakes!

Among the goods carried by the galleons were the mantones. They were brought from the ports of China by Chinese traders. Arriving in Manila, they were loaded on to the galleons for the voyage across the Pacific. The galleons docked at Acapulco. From here goods were carried across wide plains and mountains to Mexico City, then Puebla before ending up in the port of Vera Cruz. Here commenced another ocean journey. This time what needed to be traversed was the Atlantic.

Of course, mantones also made their way to other parts of Latin America. In fact, the shawls became an important feature embroidered into women's costume all over the Latin world. Similarly it is significant to note that in Spain, as Pitoy Moreno points out, mantones came to form part of many rituals and dances.

Integration

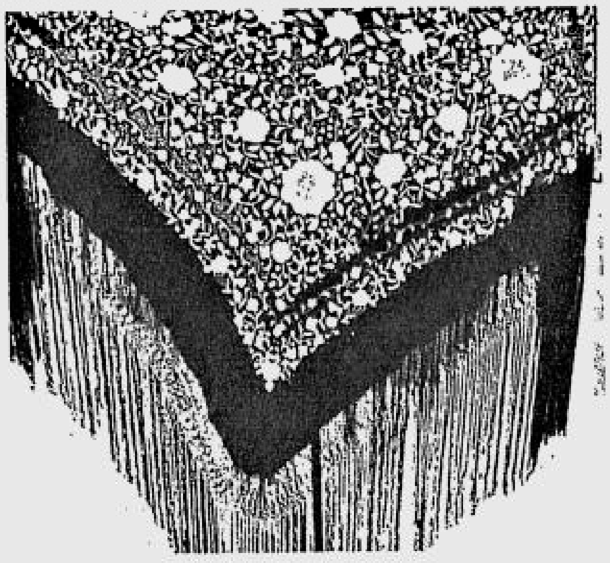
It is actually not uncommon for articles from another land to become integrated in the culture of a distant place. This is the case, for example, of Venetian glass beads that are very much part of the attire of the people of Africa. I think you find them among the peoples of the Cordillera as well.

Recently, I came across a Cuban magazine that had an article on the mantones. Unlike many of his compatriots in the Latin world, the author was aware of the mantones' true origins.

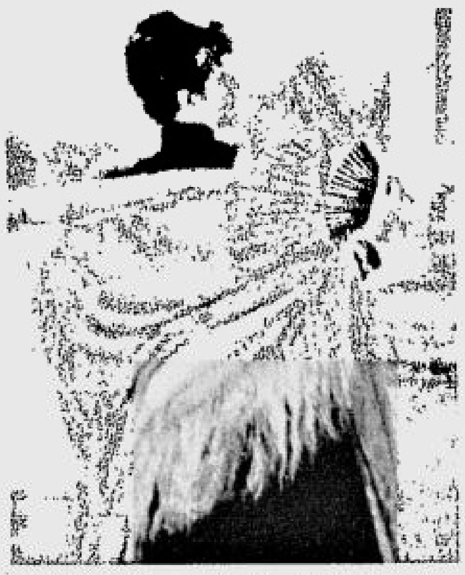
On second thought, I actually prefer it the old way. Better to leave people secure in the bliss of their confusion. Besides, wouldn't you want our country to be credited with the creation of such beautiful things?

Actually, the real reason is that I just cant see myself being so excruciatingly correct that I would start calling the shawls, "mantones de China via Manila!"

We invite readers to send in questions about our culture and arts, particularly about interesting possessions that are whimsical reminders of a by-gone era. E-mail to beartist@filipinaslibrary.org.ph or address letters to Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City.



THE BEAUTIFUL shawl actually came from China.



"LADY with Manton de Manila," by Juan Luna

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making great things possible for her Globe HANDYPHONE

BETTINA Olmedo (in red), widow of artist Onib Olmedo, poses with young artist Jason Moss and law students, including Carisa Olmedo, Nadine de Guzman and Alexander Rivera, who organized the art exhibit in honor of her husband.

ARDENT Onib Olmedo fans: Martin Lopez and Leah Puyat with Justice Undersecretary Manuel Teehankee

BETTINA Olmedo's co-Rotarian Gilda Lim (second from left) with her two children pose beside Onib Olmedo's painting "Symphony in Green" during the tribute in Galerie Joaquin.

Tributes to Onib

TWO recent exhibits paid tribute to Onib Olmedo to mark his seventh death anniversary.

The first exhibit was put up by Gig de Pio, Egai Fernandez, Manny Garibay, Lydia Velasco, Marcel Antonio, Nune Alvarado, Jack Teotico, Gino Tioseco, Carlo Saavedra and Poch Naval. "Homage to Onib Olmedo" was held in Galerie Joaquin.

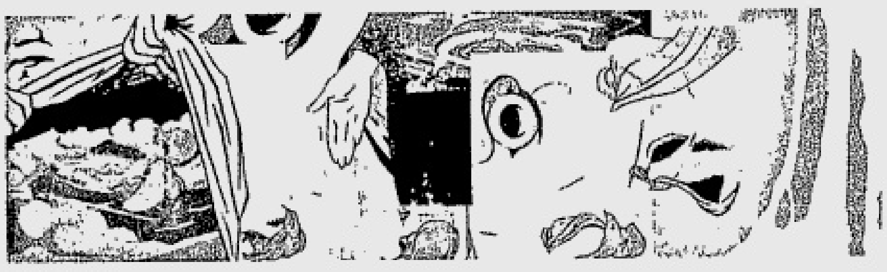
The second was a fund-raising activity organized by the Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee Foundation and the Center for the Rule of Law, and held at the Ateneo Professional Schools, Rockwell Center, Makati. It featured rare pen-and-ink works and special paintings from the private collection of Olmedo's widow Bettina.

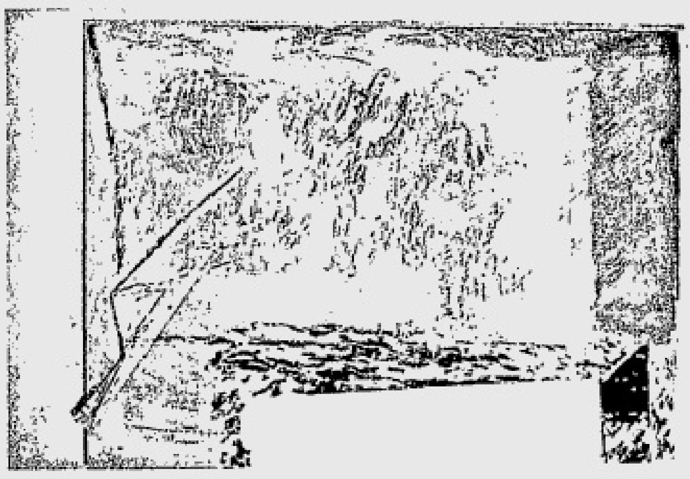
Also featured during the second tribute were figurative compositions by Jason Moss.

Proceeds benefited the Claudio Teehankee Fellowship Fund in Law.

JAIME Laya, Bettina Olmedo, Josine Loinaz Elizalde, Marietta Sanchez, Mary Prieto, Pilar Teehankee, Chit Roces, Nora Nieva and Franjo Olmedo

MARILEN Quema-Sidri and Chita Panganiban Cruel


"SWIRL," by Pablo Biglang-Awa Jr.


"GREEN Line," by Rock Drilon

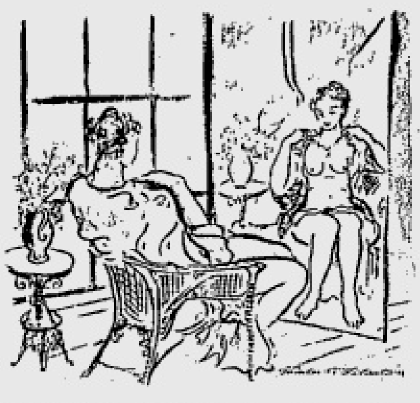
Drilon at Duemila, Olazo at West, Biglang-Awa at Mag:net, Filart at Astra

VISUAL ARTS

ROCK Drilon is showing his new works in Galleria Duemila (4/L, SM Megamall) until Feb. 9. Curated by Bernardo Pacquing, "When You Lose, Don't Lose the Lesson" features works done on shaped canvases which show the artist moving into new visual idioms and forms. The central canvas, "Yellow Line," shows the artist's penchant for spontaneity and calculation. An untitled acrylic-on-paper series echoes the artist's motifs—organic, brain-like forms, frenetic strokes of channeled energy, scribbles, a palette alternating between luminous and dark, and primitive forms. Call 8319990.

JONATHAN Olazo uses discarded objects to show how ideas evolve into art forms in "Dream World Club Manifesto," which opens in West Gallery (Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati) on Feb. 5. The show consists of found objects encased in vitrines such as styrofoam airplanes and flowers, paper stacks encased in boxes and large light boxes featuring digitally manipulated photographs. Call 7527028.

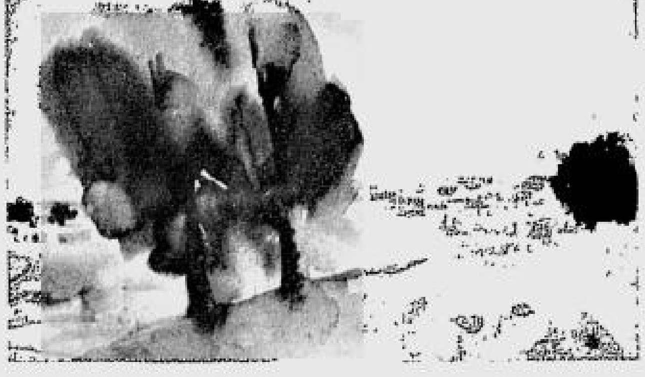
PABLO Biglang-Awa continues to experiment with fragmented, animé-driven images and non-figurative styles in "Remix," until Feb. 6 in Mag:net Gallery in Makati. Call 8177895.


"SEATED Nude & Reflection," by Carlos Filart

CARLOS Filart presents his collection of nudes in "Free of All Prudery" on Feb. 6-9 in Galerie Astra at the Art Pavilion, 2/F, LRI Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia St. (formerly Reposo), Makati City.

The paintings use mixed media, from watercolor to acrylic and gouache (poster colors). Filart's nudes are reminiscent of the women of the Impressionists, with inspirations from Modigliani and Matisse.

The opening reception is on Feb. 6, 7 p.m. Call 9119694 or 0917-8211513.


TWENTY watercolor works, such as "Angono, 1971" (left) by National Artist Vicente Manansala, are on view in "Waterworks," which opens today at Gallery Nine (4/L, SM Megamall). Also on show are works by Angel Cacnio, Alfred Galura and Jun Tiongco. Call 6877302.

Art of the temporal and the external

By Constantino C. Tejero

THE SPIRITUAL dimension of commonplace materials is what's at the heart of Arte Povera. As with the work of the avant-garde German sculptor Josef Beuys, here the artist takes on the role of shaman, "channeling energy from objects and giving them new powers and new meaning."

It is this ode to worthless materials that we see in Claro Ramirez's "Hang-up," a surprising show of seven sculptural pieces in mixed media, until Feb. 3 in West Gallery at the Artlane, L/3, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati.

Here are excess materials, surplus objects, discards, remnants from his previous works Ramirez has pieced together and fashioned into artworks that comment on the temporal and the external in people's lives. Taking fashion as the embodiment of this temporality and the externals, he has made the clothes hanger the central motif and symbol of his exhibit.

"The ordinary hanger gives form to what we drape on our bodies—fabrics that not only betray our clothing preferences but also conceal our physical shells," says the artist. "It stands in for the frail, rusted and pliant frames we latch onto as we negotiate the everyday."

These assemblages of bits and pieces play on the question of what's important in life. In fashion, for instance, what is lovelier, the clothes or the wearer? In art, what is more valuable, the painting or the frame?

Inside and outside

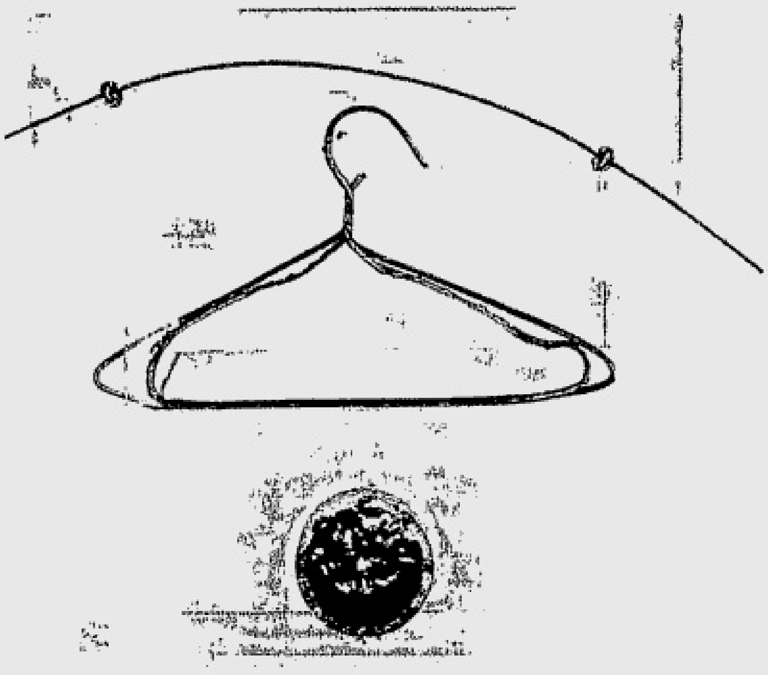
Ramirez uses pinewood, galvanized-iron wire, glass, paperboard, cement, silicone resin, paint, packing tape, electric light.

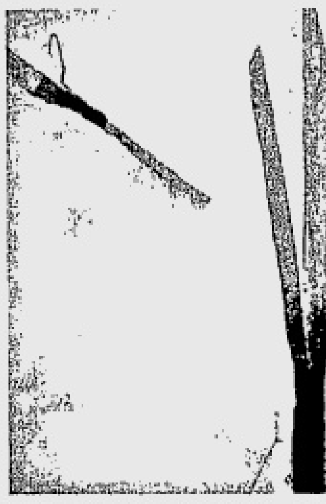
The pieces of pinewood are rough-hewn, cut with a chain-saw, and partially wrapped with wire. The wooden beams and plywood boards are slathered with white cement and transparent resin, or coated with primer, patching compound, industrial paint, acrylic and modeling paste.

Playing with texture and appearance, the artist contrasts opacity with transparency, and blends the beige of the wood with the brown of the paperboard, the gray of the metal, the white of the paint.

Trying to reduce things to the bare essentials, he says he uses white paint as add-on because it is "*medyo* basic." This makes the pieces quite subdued, 'that in group exhibits they easily stand out because "*katabi nila malalakas ang kulay.*"

In "Hang-ups," real hangers are mixed with add-on photorealist hangers painted on the board, which is spread in parts with cement and resin. A carton tube is glued and a sheet of glass screwed onto the board. Through the tube, under glass covering, one can see wood shavings lighted by fluorescence inside.


"HALAGA"


"BALANCE" and "Kargado"

Inscribed on the artwork like a torn manuscript is a passage from the Genesis in Tagalog, the genealogy of the builders of the tower of Babel. The artist explains the impulse of those people in building the tower was to make a name for themselves.

The artwork then alludes to the biblical passage: what a person puts on, whether clothes or persona, to be known to society, in the context of wardrobe making the man.

Ramirez points out the wood shavings are the clothing of the tree. "It is the external of the tree that is now turned into the internal of the artwork. Which is more valuable, what's inside or what's outside?"

Theory and technique

It is the same concept behind the integration of the corrugated paperboard in "Packaging." He says it came from what was used to cover an artwork of his shipped back from Japan after an exhibition.

"Before, this was something used to protect an artwork," he explains. "Now it is the reverse, as I have made it the focus as an artwork itself. The outer layer is now the inner layer."

Accident plays a role in his artmaking. When the wood grinder slips, for instance, the result he integrates as an element of the artwork.

"A mistake can be turned into skill," he says. "With respect to nature, *'yung kinakalawang ang* material, showing its age—that I also like to integrate, *kasama na sa* artwork, as add-on."

A painter, sculptor and installation artist, Ramirez received the Thirteen Artists Award from the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 2000. He took up Commercial Arts at the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts and majored in Painting in University of the Philippines.

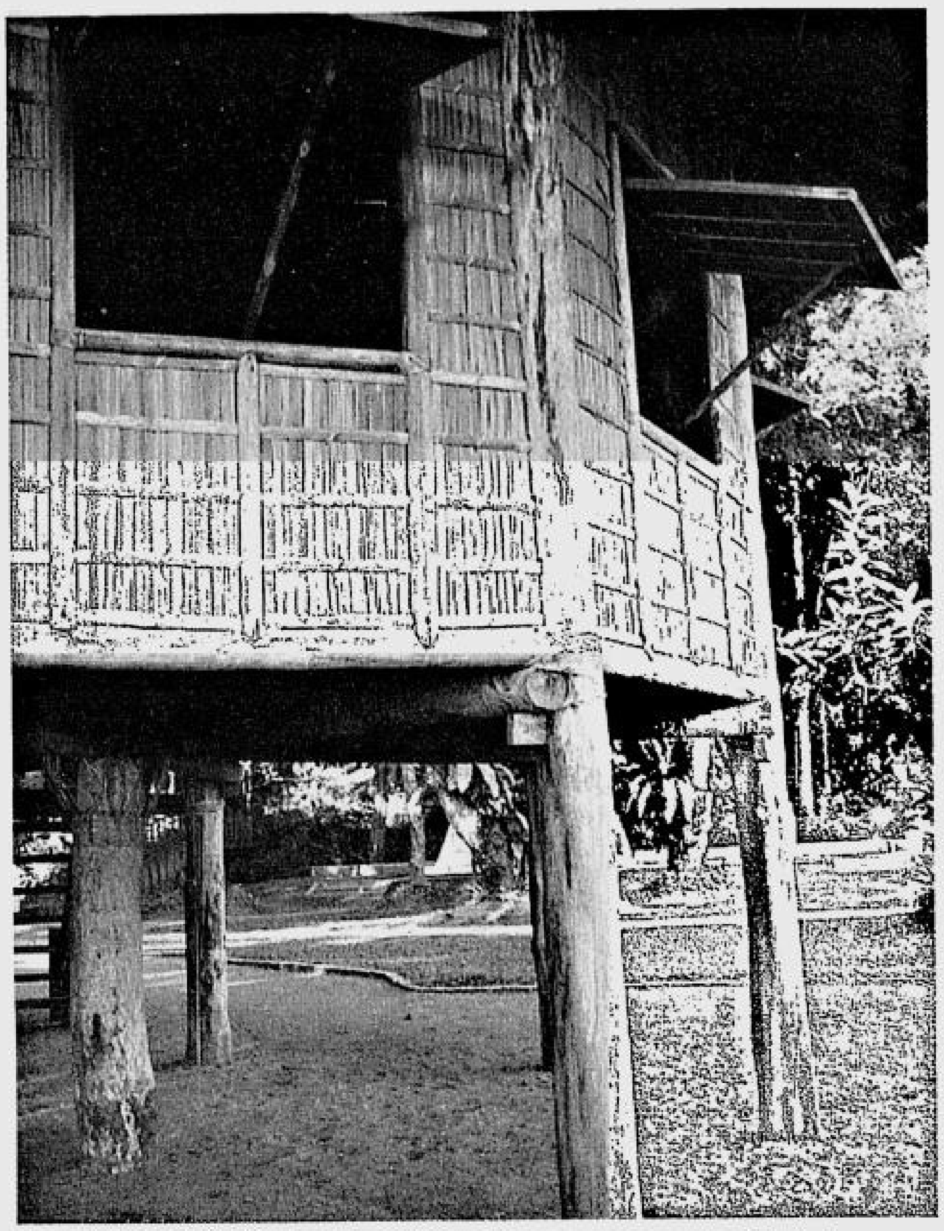
He says he learned skill and technique from UST, and concept and theory from UP. His UP mentor Roberto Chabet encouraged him at one time to paint with his left hand "to be able to see other stuff," he says, since he was already polished with his right hand.

"*Pulido na nga mag*-paint, but I couldn't see the texture, the roughness of the paint," he continues. "These qualities can be used as elements of the artwork, which I had not seen before."

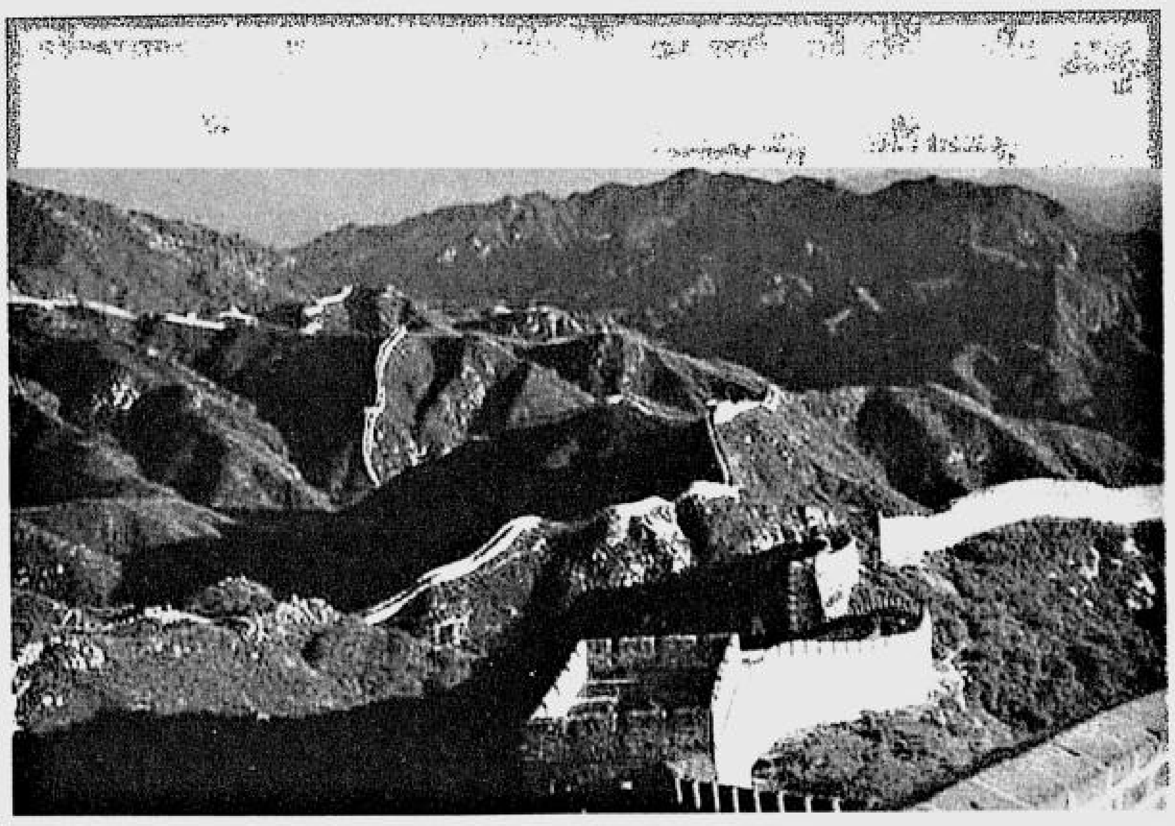
At the same time he was mentored by Chabet, he apprenticed with National Artist Cesar Legaspi, necessarily creating clashes in the theories and techniques he applied on his work.

The hard theorizing he attributes to Chabet, while discipline, professionalism and mastery of medium and technique he says he learned from Legaspi.

"*Nu'ng una, nagka*-conflict," he recalls. "I would say to myself, Okay *naman 'tong* drawing *ko, ba't hindi kay* Sir Chabet? But now I see his point."



THINK how outdoor advertising would damage the historic appearance of Rizal's Casa Redonda in Dapitan.



OUTDOOR advertising has absolutely no place in an international icon like the Great Wall of China.

Outdoor advertising must be regulated

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

TWO weeks ago, we looked at how uncontrolled and excessive outdoor advertising clutters our landscape. That column has elicited several reactions, showing public concern over the need to regulate outdoor advertising.

"Your column on the excessive vulgar outdoor advertising now prevailing was [timely]," wrote Dr T., the medical director of a respected Manila hospital. "The whole landscape is being spoiled, both inside and outside Manila. The whole stretch of the Candaba segment of the North Expressway is just one solid stretch of giant billboards in either direction. The whole stretch of the highway up to Baguio is just plastered with streamers, billboards, announcements of all sorts tacked on trees, electric posts, etc."

The most interesting response was from Hugo Perez Jr., president of the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines, who wrote:

"Contrary to your claim of non-regulation of the industry, legitimate outdoor-advertising practitioners are members of the Outdoor Advertising Association of the Philippines (OAAP). It is a 39-year old association whose main function is self-regulation within its industry.

"It [OAAP] adheres to a very strict Code of Ethics, which include, among others, observance of engineering safety standards in structure construction which exceed those set by the National Building Code, and respect for national and historical sites and landmarks. Also contrary to your perception, there are rules and regulations governing the installation of all forms of outdoor advertising set by the law in the National Building Code as amended by PD 1096."

The regulations on the installation of outdoor advertising are covered in full in Chapter 20 of the National Building Code of the Philippines (PD 1096) which regulates the placement of any type of signage including advertising to protect the safety of the public.

The code specifies basic construction details, allows only certain materials to be used, and demands measures for adequate fire protection. It requires that signage be set back from high-voltage power lines, fire escapes, or standpipes, and demands that no windows and doors of any edifice are blocked.

These are general rules and regulations not specific to the outdoor-advertising industry, but rules that govern any structure built in the Philippines by architects and engineers. The regulations observed by the OAAP, as Perez writes, take up two pages out of the total of 402 pages of the Building Code.

The provisions cited by Perez are tangible requirements set for the construction industry to comply with. Non-compliance is grounds for legal action. Complying with the tangible Building Code requirements simply assures us that signage will neither come unscrewed and fall on our heads or be blown away by strong typhoon winds.

The intangibles, however, are another story.

The intangible aspect is covered in Section 2001 (b) of the Building Code, which states:

"No sign or signboard shall be constructed as to unduly obstruct the natural view of the landscape, distract or obstruct the view of the public as to constitute a traffic hazard, or otherwise defile, debase or offend aesthetic and cultural values and traditions."

No compliance

There it is. Legislation that protects natural views exists after all, a law that specifies that the landscape and aesthetic, cultural values and traditions are to be preserved. The OAAP does not comply with these. Outdoor advertising carries messages of all sorts printed in an assortment of sizes. These are indiscriminately hung, plastered or tacked on practically any surface. Some surfaces, despite recent Department of Environment and National Resources prohibitions, are living surfaces. Driving nails into tree trunks and branches can cause serious damage.

Obviously outdoor advertising obstructs the "natural view of the landscape, distract or obstruct the view of the public as to constitute a traffic hazard, or otherwise defile, debase or offend aesthetic and cultural values and traditions."

This issue of visual clutter desperately needs increased private outcry which hopefully will lead to the passing of proper legislation that preserves our landscape through strict policing of the placement and quantity of outdoor advertising. Without strict control, the dwindling of our shared national heritage of vistas and landscapes will continue until every vista in the country is covered with advertising.

Tagaytay is an example of a vista removed from the public domain. We go there for two things: the cool air and the view of Taal Lake. Once there was a time when the Taal Lake vista opened up as soon as one got to the Tagaytay Rotonda. The vista became more magnificent along the road that followed the Tagaytay ridge.

Today the vista from the *rotonda* and from most of the ridgetop road is gone. Tall structures and advertising cover the view.

Its geographic location high above Taal Lake and the breathtaking view is what makes Tagaytay unique. The view is for all Filipinos to enjoy, a part of their national patrimony.

Instead of the public being able to fully enjoy the view, private houses now block the lakeside view that is public domain. This is another case where regulation is needed.

To protect our heritage of vistas from the clutter that now debases it, the optimum solution would be to totally ban outdoor advertising. However a reality check forces us to consider the next best thing: introducing strong regulation specific to outdoor advertising, which is sorely lacking in the country.

Another reader, Mr. E.L. of Manila, said he "wholly agreed" with my column." He continued with a parody of Joyce Kilmer's "Trees":

I think I shall never see, a billboard as pretty as a tree;
And if billboards never fall, I'll never see a tree at all.

E-mail afvillalon@hotmail.com

> There are laws to protect natural sites and cultural heritage from outdoor ads, but they are not followed or enforced

Life Rx

from Dr. Ricardo Fernandez

CoQ10: A Fountain of Youth?

How are healthy cells and aging related?
Aging cannot be stopped, but we can slow down the process and prevent its more visible manifestations from appearing. The key to this is by having healthy cells and living a healthy lifestyle. Scientists discovered that aging is hastened when cells are damaged. These cells are responsible for the body's overall health by producing energy and promoting skin elasticity.
How are cells damaged and how can it be protected?
Cells are attacked by free radicals. These free radicals are created when the cell produces energy. They are actually by-products of energy production. Free radicals are unstable molecules that attack cells, making them unstable as well through a series of chemical reactions.
What are the manifestations of cell damage?
Skin. When cells in the outer layer of the skin are damaged and they cannot be replaced quickly and adequately by the body, thinning and wrinkle formation takes place. And since these skin cells are disorganized due to free radical attack, they tend to be active in some areas and inactive in others causing an imbalance. This results in the formation of wrinkles, eye bags, the enlarging of earlobes, the formation of age spots and other skin problems.
Strength. Energy production is the major function of cells. Loss in cellular efficiency due to free radical attack impacts on the body's overall strength and energy.
Cancer. It has been known that unhealthy cells develop into cancer cells.
How can you prevent premature aging and slow down the aging process?
Prevention is still the best recourse. If you start protecting your cells from free radicals now, you will benefit from the results, as you grow older. Free radicals can be eliminated by antioxidants. Antioxidants stabilize free radicals to render them harmless.
Is there a natural antioxidant?
Yes! The body creates its own antioxidants and one of the major antioxidants is called Coenzyme Q10 or CoQ10. It is present in the cells, but decreases in amount due to aging and environmental and lifestyle changes. Since it
is natural, it is safe and can be immediately used by the body.
CoQ10 has been successfully synthesized and is now available in its pure form. In the Philippines, pure CoQ10 is available under the name AddLife CoQ10. It is marketed by Pascual Laboratories and is available in major drugstores nationwide.

This is for educational purposes only and is not meant to replace your doctor's advice.
Ask your doctor for more information or you can call the AddLife Hotline
at 920-1911

Dr. Ricardo O. Fernandez finished his Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas. He is a consultant at the Makati Medical Center and Associate Board Examiner of the Philippine Board of Otolaryngology.

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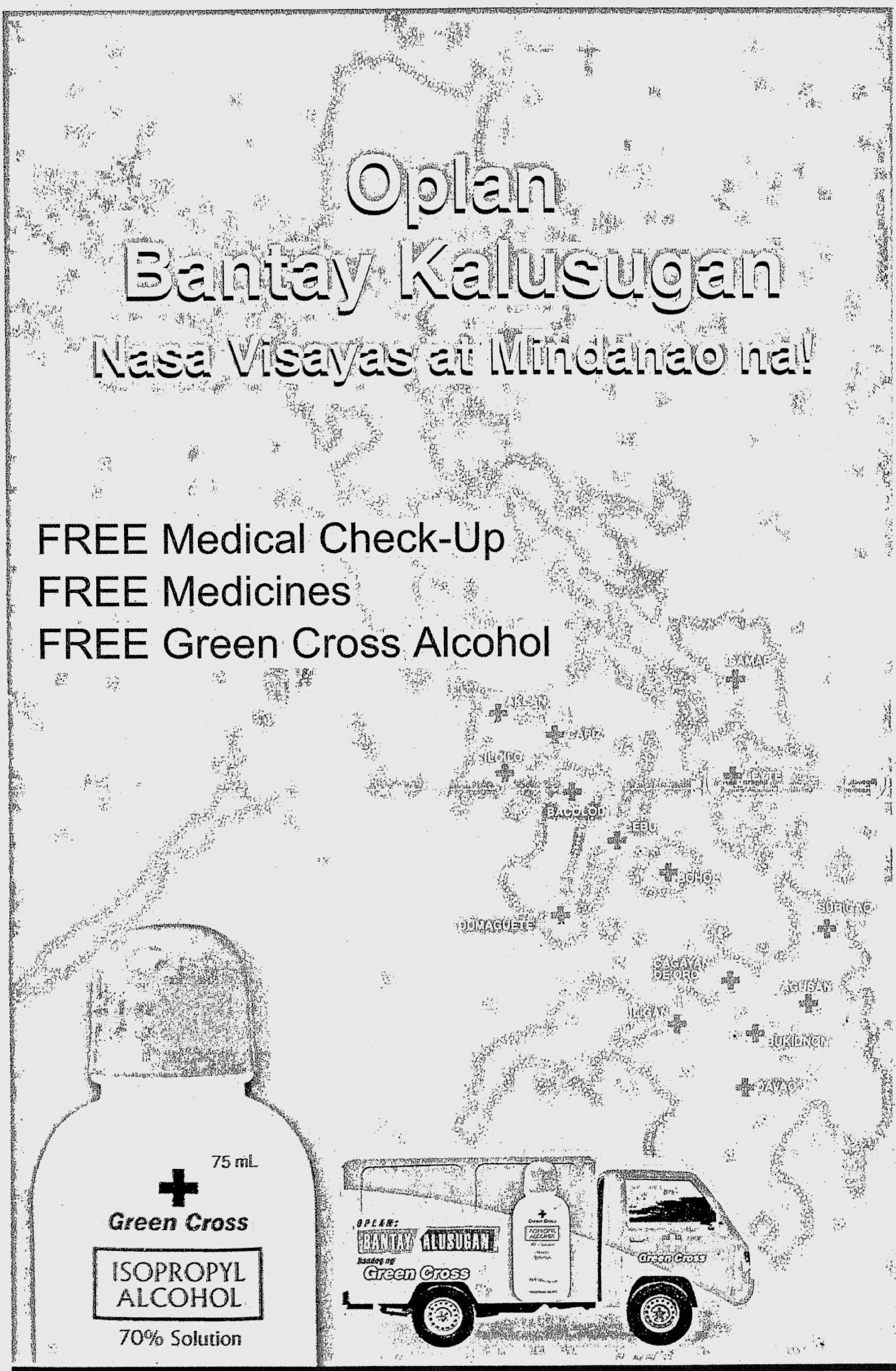
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Negros Or.	May 1 - 26	Antique	Aug 31 - Sep 16
Negros Occ.	May 27 - June 27	Leyte	June 14 - Aug 8 Oct 1
Iloilo	June 28 - July 28 Sept 17 - Oct 1	Samar	Aug 9 - Sep 30

MINDANAO			
Davao	Feb 2 - 15	Agusan	Apr 15 - May 5
Davao del Norte	Feb 16 - 22	Misamis Or.	May 6 - June 2
Compostela Valley	Feb 23 - Mar 3	Bukidnon	June 3 - 12
Davao Oriental	Mar 4 - 20		
Surigao	Mar 14 - Apr 13		

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Oplan Bantay Kalusugan kicks off today at the Plaza Independencia, Cebu City and Rizal Park, Davao City. It's a special project undertaken by Green Cross, Inc. to care for and protect the health of the Filipino family.

LIFESTYLE
For feedback, text us at (0918) 382-4061 or (0916) 200-1160 or e-mail us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Arts/Design

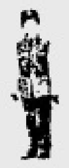
FERNANDO Poe Jr. with Susan Roces in "Perlas ng Silangan"

Macapagal, Poe square off in 2004 Arts Month

By Lito B. Zulueta

ALL is fair in art and politics as the National Arts Month this year features nearly forgotten films of controversial presidential front-runner Fernando Poe Jr. and of President Diosdado Macapagal, the father of the presidential incumbent. Although the film lineup is just one of the components of the Arts Month, which formally opened yesterday with a broadcast launching in the Sunday variety show "S.O.P" on GMA 7 and a mall launching at Ever Gotesco-Ortigas, it promises to give more than a festive ambience to the

MACAPAGAL/ E2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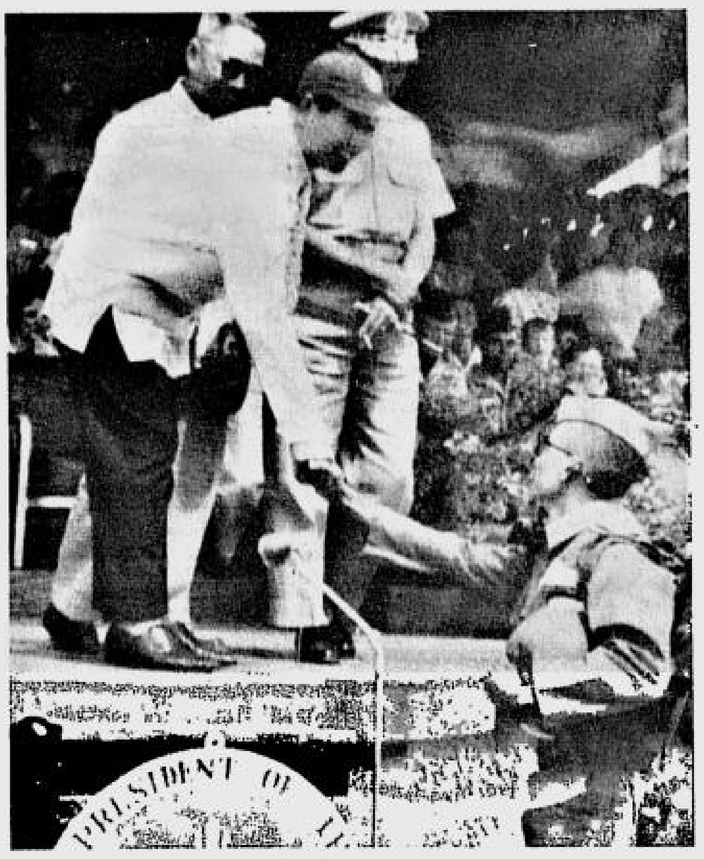
Macapagal, Poe square off in 2004 Arts Month



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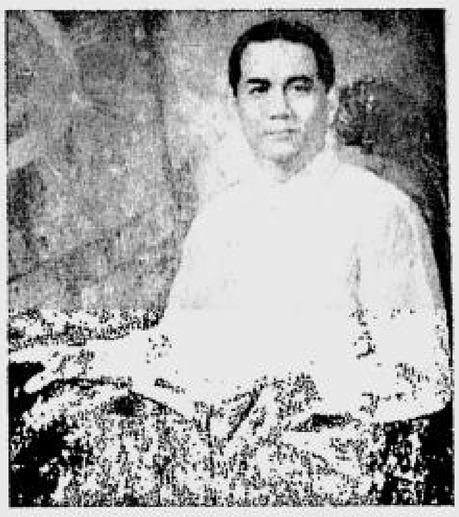

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Flipping around

By Walter Ang
Contributor"

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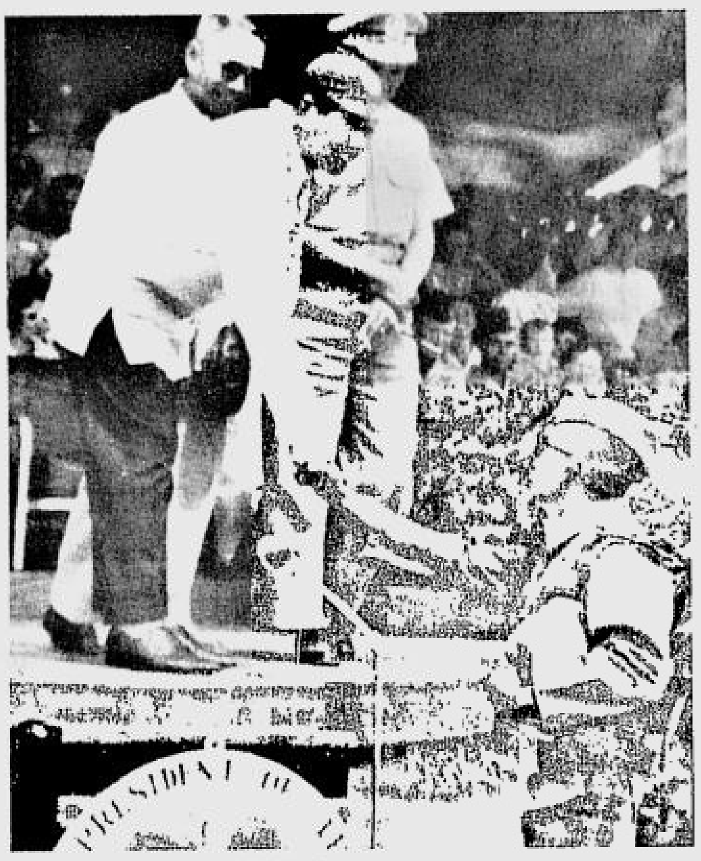

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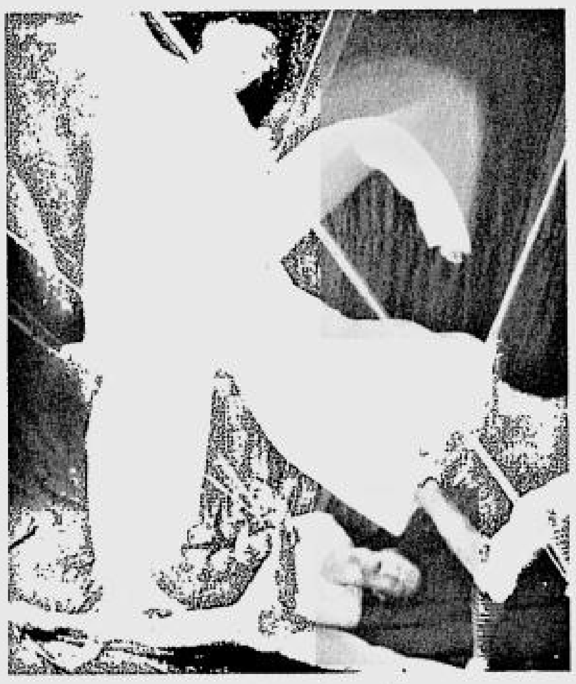

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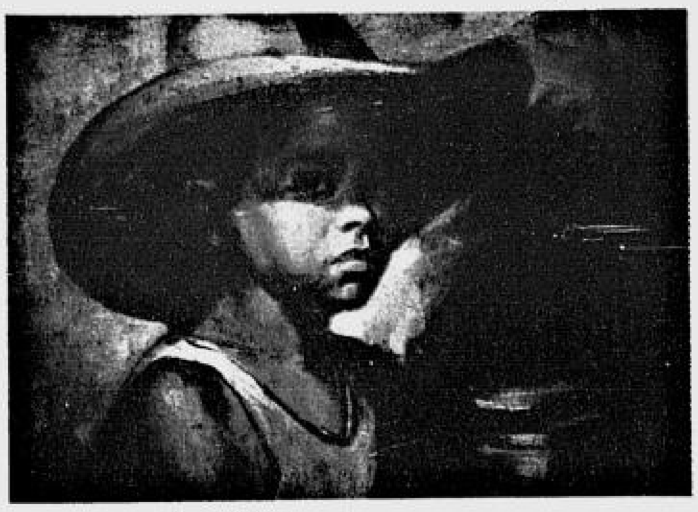
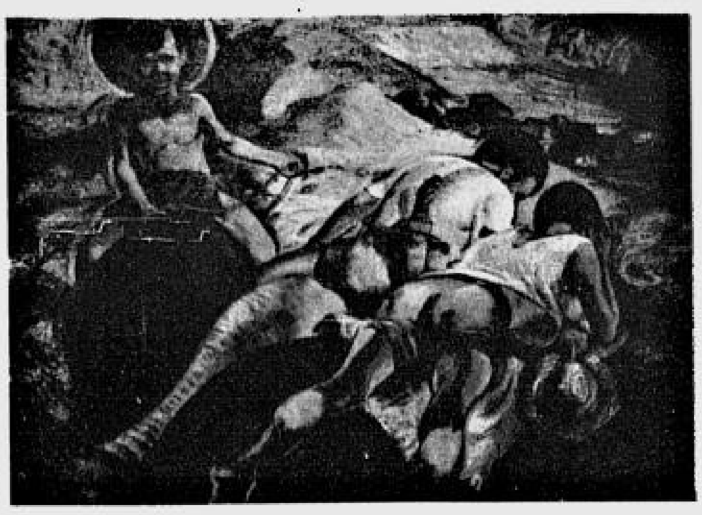
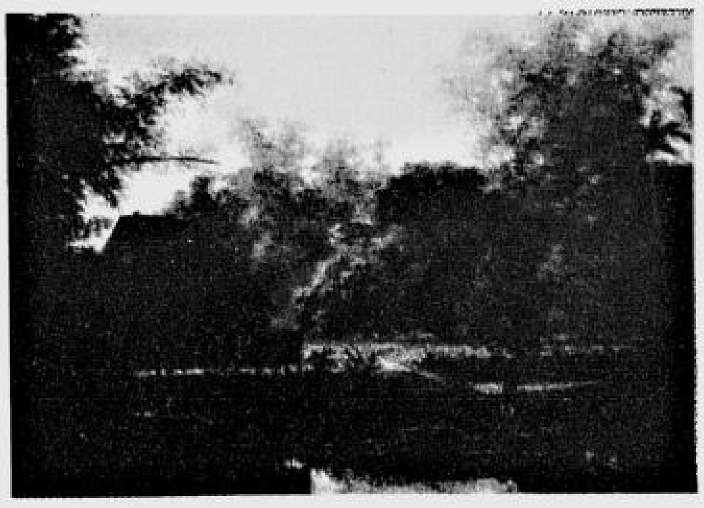


"LIMPIA Botas," by Pablo Amorsolo



"(THE) PASTORAL," by Carlos Francisco



"L'STUDIO del Natural," by Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo

'FROM THE CHURCH TO THE ACADEMY'

Exhibit traces roots of art and museum movement

By Eldric Paul Peredo
Contributor

THE MUSEUM movement in the country traces its roots to both evangelization and education. This is underscored in the exhibit, "From the Church to the Academy: The Development of Art Schools and Philippine Painting," which will open on Feb. 4 at the University of Santo Tomas Museum of Arts and Sciences. The show will feature selections from the museum's vast visual arts collection.

Curated by art scholar Ma. Victoria T. Herrera of the University of the Philippines, the show underscores the evolution of art training and painting in the country as a timely offering for the National Arts Month celebration.

The oldest museum in the country, the UST Museum started in 1870 as a teaching collection of specimens for natural history and medicine courses. It later expanded to include ecclesiastical artifacts and religious images.

In 1940, it began an art acquisition program. Its vast collection in the sciences and the arts, according to Herrera, "is almost comparable in scope to that of a national museum."

Only a fraction of the collection is permanently on display. The art collection, for example, includes paintings, graphic works, and sculptures "that represent styles, movements, and individual artists who have contributed to the enrichment of the country's visual art traditions," Herrera said.

Training and patronage

The title points to the development of art training and patronage through the years. The selected works cover the 18th century to the early 20th century and are grouped to represent four phases.

The first phase covers the production of images during the Spanish regime, and includes works that illustrate the dominant role of the Church as an art patron. Juan Arzeo is one of the artists from this period.

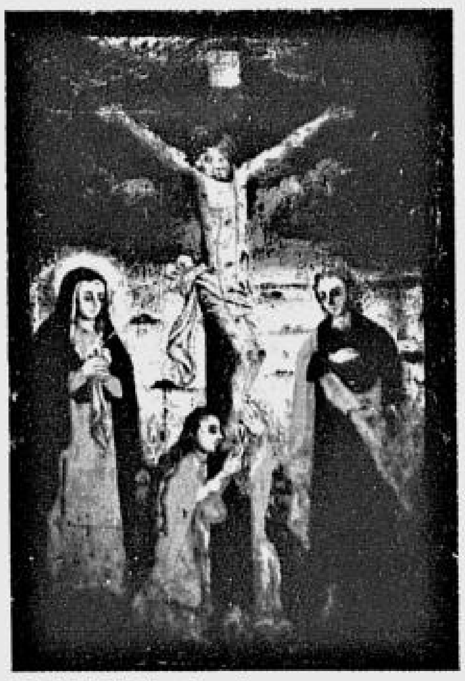
The second phase delineates the beginning of formal art training in the early 19th century, with the 1826 founding of the Academia de Dibujo, headed by Damian Domingo. It was during this period that artists were encouraged to shift from religious themes to other subjects, from the historical to the allegorical, including secular portraits, landscapes, and still life. Artists during this period include Juan Luna, Felix Resurreccion Hidalgo and Miguel Zaragoza.

The third phase presents artists who founded and were part of the University of the Philippines School of Fine Arts such as Rafael Enriquez, Joaquin Herrer, Fabian dela Rosa, and the Amorsolo brothers Fernando and Pablo.

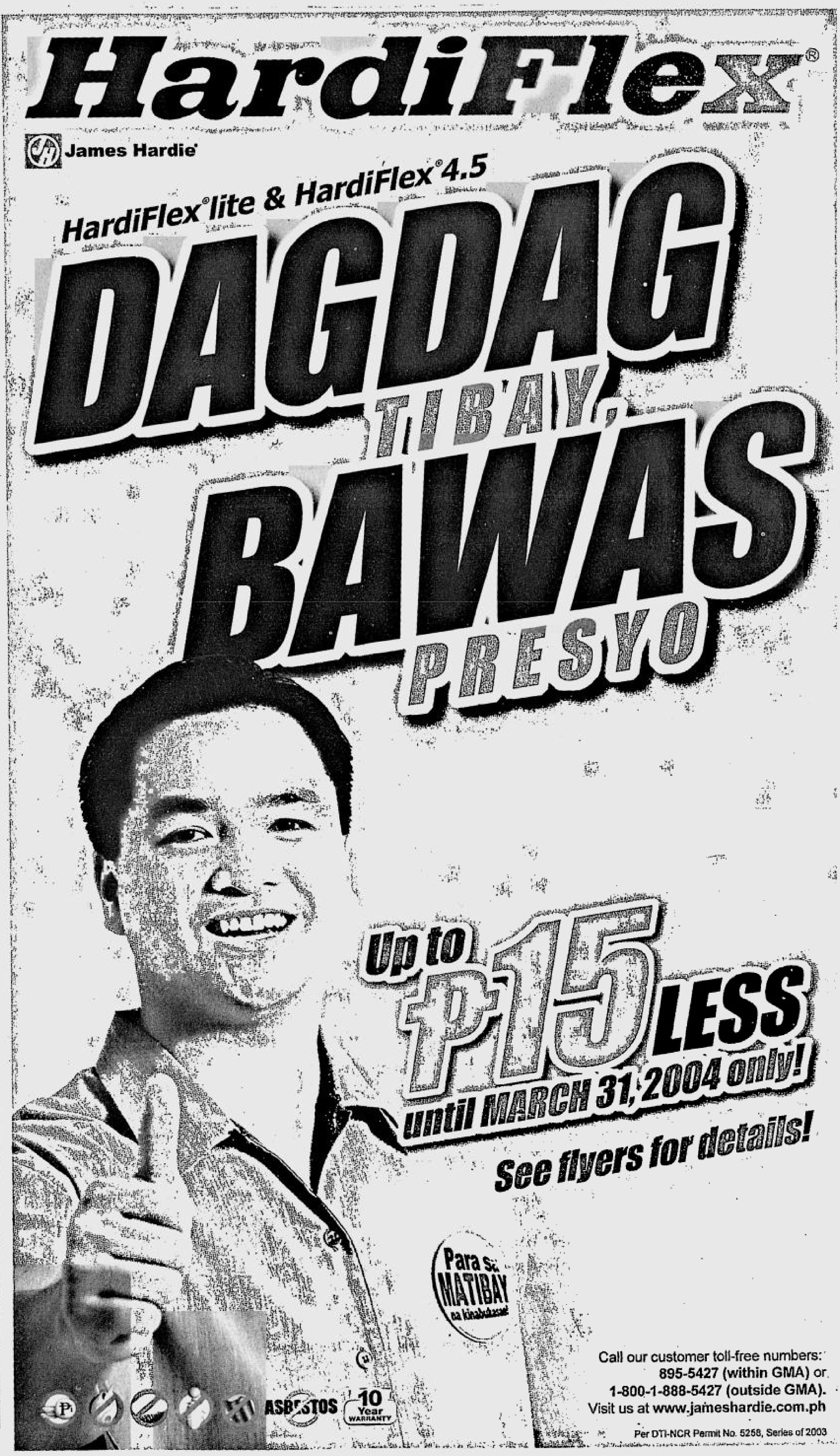
The last phase features the works of early Modernism, the movement led by Victorio Edades, who was instrumental in founding the art and architecture programs of UST. Among his peers and converts were Galo Ocampo, Carlos Francisco, Diosdado Lorenzo, Vicente Manansala, and Ricarte Puruganan, who also taught at UST.

The exhibit, according to Herrera, starts a series of program "that will underline the strengths of the UST Museum's art collection... in preserving the cultural patrimony" of the Philippines.

"From the Church to the Academy" will run until Mar. 4. There will be a curator's lecture on Feb. 17. Contact assistant curator Jocelyn Dare Tullao at 7811815 or 7409718; or e-mail museum@ust.edu.ph.



"CALVARIO," artist unknown



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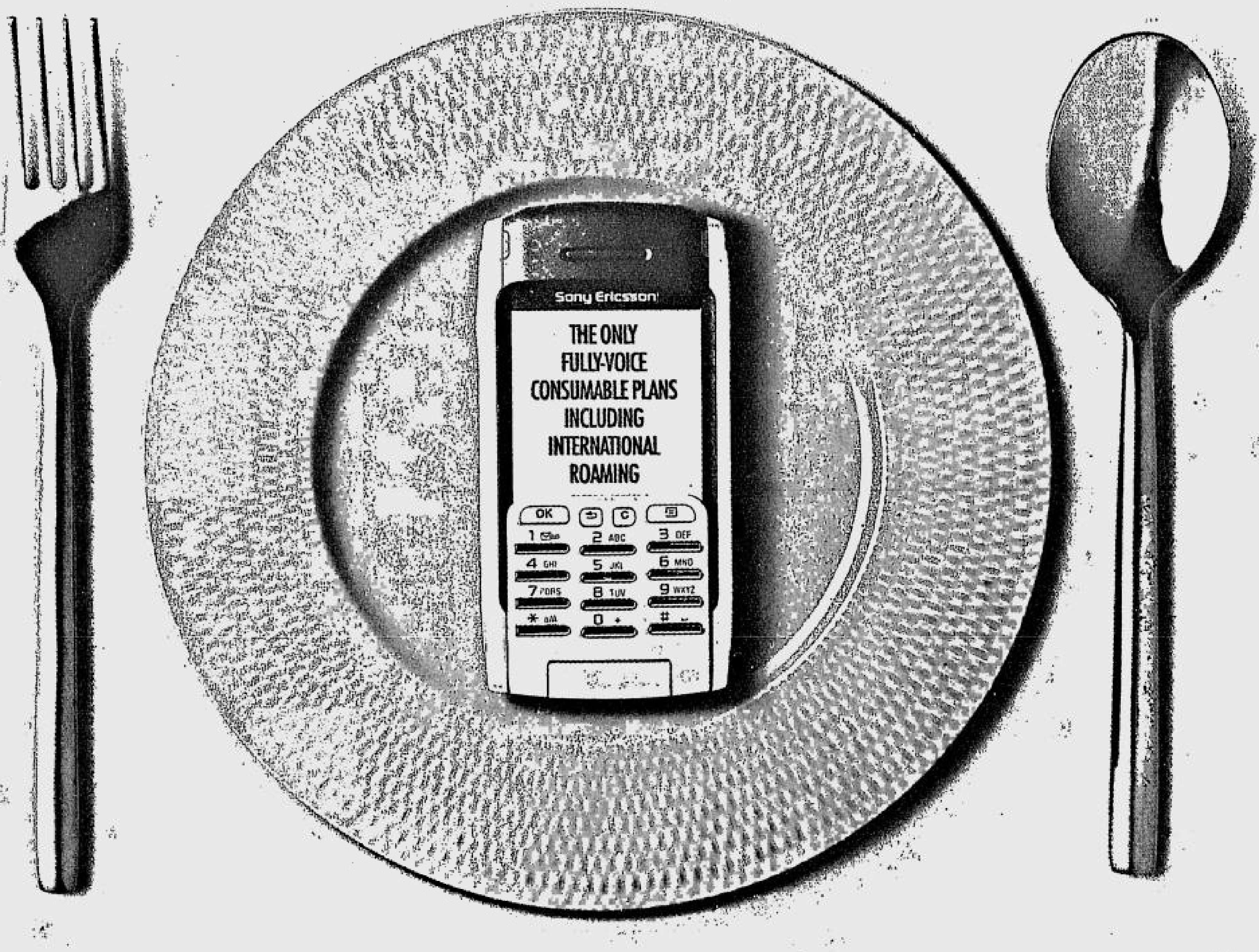

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